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IF THOU WERT FALSE.

BY A. L. S.

If thou wert false to me, what could I do?—
If thou wert false to me, what could I say?
Could I look up and face the light of day—
Thou faithless and I true?

I could not dare to speak a word of blame,
But in my heart the grief would lie and ache;
Calmness without, my lips could never take
The music of thy name.

The pain would choke me if I tried to weep—
The stifled sorrow would lay waste within;
Tears might relieve, but tears I might not win—
Rest, but could not sleep.

There could be neither tears, nor peace, nor rest,
Till I forgave as I would be forgiven;
Then might the bonds of frozen grief be riven,
And sobbings ease my breast.

If thou wert false to me while I was true,
I would remember rather than forget—
Loving thee still with that uncancelled debt
Of love for ever due.

SO NEARLY LOST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A MODEL GIRL," "A LITTLE VIRAGO," "LADYBIRD," "WILFUL BAB," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THERE was a flush of excitement on Diana's cheeks the next morning as she fastened her cloak preparatory to setting off to her appointment. Anne stood looking at her, with a clothes brush in her hand, with which she was going to give her young lady the finishing touches when she was ready.

"I hope he will not think I look very young by daylight," Miss Terry said, inspecting herself rather anxiously. "Even if he does, he can't change his mind now, do you think so?"

"Oh, no," Anne observed comfortingly. "He's a deal too nice a young man for that. Look at the way he took that tray out of my hand! There, you might have knocked me down with a feather, I was that surprised. He wouldn't be up to any mean tricks, I'll go bail."

"He is an American," Diana remarked, "at least, his parents were English, but he calls himself a naturalised American, and seems proud of it."

"You don't think he's got anything to do with them as have got themselves so mixed up with dynamite and such like, do you?" Anne asked, anxiously.

"No," Diana laughed. "I think I could answer for him as far as that goes."

She knitted her brow as she rode along in the omnibus, thinking over the knotty question of how she ought to behave to her employer.

"I shall have to see a good deal of him, so I must take care not to get too friendly," she told herself.

"If he has rich friends, they would be sure to think it very presumptuous of me—though I don't believe such an idea would cross his mind for a minute."

But, when she reached the house at last, at exactly two minutes to ten, and found Mr. Carr waiting expectantly on the dusty steps, there was something in his expression that, in spite of all her resolution, turned her intended chilly bow into a friendly handshake.

"It is very good of you to be so punctual," he remarked. "I have been blaming myself for naming so early an hour. I hope it has not inconvenienced you?"

"Not at all," Diana answered; and her voice echoed strangely through the great empty hall. "I was equally as eager to be here as you. You can't think how delightful it is to me to be really at work. I hope you have not repented of your having given anyone with so little practical experience as I such a large piece of work."

"I believe in beginners," the young man said seriously. "If a man is worth anything at all, and he gets a good chance at the first set off, he will do his level best. And I suppose the same rule will apply to a woman."

Somehow the girl could not answer for a moment. It seemed so delightful of him to have so much confidence in her that it almost took her breath away. They went all over the house, and measured and consulted, and decided, and re-decided, causing the time to pass swiftly.

"You have never asked me for the photograph," the young man reminded Diana at last, with some little reproach in his tone. "I suppose you forgot all about it?"

"Oh, no, I didn't!" Diana replied. "But I was waiting for you to speak of it first. May I see it now?"

Mr. Carr drew a small morocco case from his pocket with a little awkward air which was at once shy and proud. While she opened it, he wandered away and stared out of the window, and yet Diana knew instinctively that every glance of his was on the alert for expression on her face.

He had turned away that he might not watch her, and yet she felt somehow as if he were actually beside her as she gazed down at the little picture in her hand.

It was a charming face Diana gave a short sigh as she noticed the perfect contour and regularity of the features.

She appreciated the beauty that had been denied to her. It was no wonder that she for a moment contrasted herself unfavorably with the presentment of the girl before her.

"Well?" asked Mr. Carr, turning round sharply. He had waited as long as he could.

"She is lovely!" Diana declared, looking up at him with truthful eyes. "I don't wonder you are in love with her. If I was a man, I should be too."

"It's very good of you to speak so enthusiastically," he said gratefully. "I was sure from the first moment I saw you that you would like her. What do you think she would be likely to fancy now if she had a house arranged entirely according to her own taste? Can you imagine from that picture, do you think?"

Diana glanced at the portrait again. The girl was evidently handsome, and her dress was perfect, the photograph itself being one of the best specimens of the art that she had ever seen.

"She is accustomed to beautiful surroundings," Diana replied slowly, "and would evidently look upon them as her right. She will not be easily pleased, I think, and yet I believe I could satisfy her."

"That room which we were talking of as being fitted for the lady of the house, how would you do that, for instance?" Mr. Carr inquired eagerly.

Diana took out her pencil and made little drawings; she had always been clever at expressing her ideas in this fashion. Mr. Carr looked, listened, and assented. All at once the sound of a church clock striking two startled them both.

"I had no idea it was so late!" Diana exclaimed. "I must go back at once. Anne will be quite frightened."

"Allow me to take you to have some luncheon," the young fellow begged. "I have been very selfish and thoughtless; I must have fairly tired you out. Do come, and let me get you something."

But Miss Terry declined with a little laugh at the thought of her lunching, especially with clients of the male sex.

"A pretty thing that would be!" she said to herself. But to him she only repeated that she must get back or Anne would be nervous.

Mr. Carr insisted on putting her into a hansom, however, and she leaned back in it feeling rather tired after the morning's work, but well satisfied that she was on the road to fortune.

Mr. Irwine came in later in the day and took her to one or two firms, by whom he was known personally, as being capable of carrying out any ideas that might be suggested. They had another cab, and Diana's tongue rattled on as fast as the horse's feet as she spoke of all she had done and meant to do. Mr. Irwine nodded and chuckled as she told him.

"It's a pity he is engaged, isn't it?" he ventured to remark, when the girl was rather loud in praise of her first client. "Such nice young fellows are rare, let me tell you. I should not mind seeing my little girl safely tied up to one. She could decorate him afterwards—design him original collars and ties, dress him as a Turk one day and as a courtier of King Charles the Second the next. How would that do, eh?"

But Diana looked at the speaker almost sorrowfully.

"If ever I marry, it shall be to a man, not a puppet; and he must be in love with me, not with a woman to whom I can't hold a candle for good looks or anything else. No—I am very glad Mr. Carr is engaged to the young lady, for I can talk to him just as easily and pleasantly as if he were already married. I know that he never concerns himself about me at all except as the person who is to make the house habitable for his fiancee."

"I wonder if she loves him?" Mr. Irwine speculated.

"Of course she does!" Diana answered promptly. "I think he is just the sort of man who would be almost irresistible if he were in love with one, though, it is not with me, I am quite well, thank you."

"Quite sure?" demanded the old gentleman.

Miss Terry nodded emphatically, as she said—

"Quite!"

"Well, now that point is satisfactorily settled, we may as well go into Hazlewood's and have a talk with him about the work you have before you," Mr. Irwine continued. "You don't seem to have observed it, but we have been standing in front of his door for the past five minutes."

Diana blushed, although she gave a faint laugh.

"I shall not become so deeply interested in my clients when I have a few more," she observed, jumping out of the vehicle.

"That, my dear, entirely depends on their age and sex," Mr. Irwine rejoined, as he paid the cabman his fare.

During the next few weeks Miss Terry was up to her eyes in business. She delighted in that, however, for it was a great pleasure to her to wake in the morning with the feeling that there was something that she was absolutely bound to do before she went to bed again. Besides that, it was a work of necessity, if only to keep Anne and herself in bread and butter.

One of the pleasantest things that happened during the time was the arrival of a large hamper from Willowmere, sent by Aunt Marjorie, who evidently feared that, if her niece and servant were not already enduring the pangs of hunger, they were not in a position to get themselves such luxuries as new-laid eggs, country butter, cream, winter pears, or plump young rabbits.

Diana was overjoyed at the receipt of the good things as she drew out one enclosure after another.

"It's so kind and good, but ridiculous of her!" she told Anne again and again. "I don't know how she expects you and me to eat so many eggs before they go bad; and what on earth are we to do with the cream and butter?"

But the old woman found nothing come amiss or superfluous. She piled her kitchen table with the good things, and positively sat down and fondled the rabbits quite sentimentally.

"The poor little dears was running about in the green fields only yesterday," she sighed. Then she glanced out at the unlovely wall that bounded the view from her window and lowered her eyes guiltily.

"Would you like to go back?" Diana whispered. "Of course I should miss you dreadfully, but I could get on, I dare say. I think it is so selfish of me sometimes to keep you here."

"I'll sit it out," Anne answered, with as much determination as though preparing herself to endure a particularly trying and wearisome sermon. "Some day I dare say we shall both go back to see the old place, and sometimes I'm fane wishing for it. But I'll stay here as long as you do. But I'll cook one of these bunnies for our dinner," she concluded, with sudden determination.

That prospect seemed to give her so much pleasure that she forgot the charms of the country in contemplating those of the rabbits. Were there ever any rabbits that were so plump and altogether so desirable as those that ran wild near Willowmere? Old Anne thought not.

CHAPTER IV.

"I SHALL be both glad and sorry when my task is finished," Diana said—she was speaking of the house at Queen's Gate. "It has been a great source of interest to me. I have put all the thought and care I could into my work, and I think it looks charming." She gave a short sigh. "I shall quite grudge giving it up to Miss Wallace—though I dare say she will not think half so much of it as I do. It will be just a house to her, and that is all. It is my——" She paused to find an expression.

"Your baby," suggested Mr. Irwine with his usual little chuckle—"your great four-cornered, newly-decorated baby! That's what it is. And you are afraid the other woman may not be able to appreciate all its wonderful points. She won't of course. What woman—or man, for that matter—cares so much for a thing that comes to her ready-made as she does for her own handiwork? It is not to be expected. Let us hope that she will make up by enthusiasm to the master what she lacks in appreciation of the house. Do you see as much of the young man as ever, by the way?"

"Oh, I think so!" Diana answered indifferently. "He is generally at Queen's Gate some time in the day. He is very much pleased with the way I have done what we call 'her' room. It is so pretty; I should like to show it to you before I give up the keys."

"Yes—I must see it," observed Mr. Irwine. "I am interested in that tapestry room of yours. I shall be very disappointed in you if it is not done well, although it was a great thing to attempt."

"It is done well," Diana declared confidently. "But don't let us talk shop any more just now. I want to forget it for a

while. It is such a wonderful experience for me to go to the theatre that I would rather think about that. Let me see—I must be getting ready very soon."

"Take plenty of time," the old gentleman told her—"plenty of time. Take as much pains with your own appearance to-night, my dear, for my sake, as if you were decorating somebody else. You must remember that it is a treat which does not come often into an old man's life to take a young and pretty girl to a theatre. I should like to be envied once more. I have almost forgotten how that feels. I want the young fellows to stare at me as I hand you to your place, and say to one another, 'What a lucky old beggar!' or make some other remark of the sort that has come in since 'lucky beggar' went out. My slang is quite out of date, I fear."

"I shall not quarrel with you for that," Diana replied, smiling, as she rose. "I dislike slang, and I would much rather go anywhere with an old fellow, as you like to call yourself, than with an——"

"Young American, for instance," Mr. Irwine ventured to interpose. "You are quite right there, my dear. I myself, have always thought the Yankee race singularly lacking in all that chivalrous courtesy which is so right and so proper when paid by man to woman."

"That is just because you know nothing about it!" Diana retorted sharply. "The only American I know well is really an Englishman—by blood, I mean"—as Mr. Irwine smiled. "But with all your chivalry you never offered to carry the tray for old Anne. Did you?"

"I must confess I never did," Mr. Irwine admitted.

"I think," Diana continued, severely, "that Americans are really more civil than Englishmen, because it seems to me they pay respect to the woman herself, and not to the gown she may happen to wear."

"You are talking treason, and nonsense besides; and you know it," the old gentleman asserted. "But, if you will only allow me to get to the theatre in time, I will forgive you."

* * * * * *

The first act of the play was over.

"Well, are you enjoying yourself?" Diana's escort asked her; but she did not give him her usual ready attention. On the contrary, she did not seem even to hear him.

His eyes followed the direction of hers, which were fixed upon one of the stage boxes. Her breath was coming quickly. Evidently what she saw interested her unusually.

Mr. Irwine put on his gold-rimmed glasses, and, when he could see the occupants of the box distinctly, he found they were two ladies and two men. One lady was elderly, the other quite a girl; but both men were young. One of them was handsome and of singularly muscular build.

His face was browned, as if from an out-of-door life, and his hair and moustache were fair. The other was older, slimmer, darker, and to him the girl was talking. Mr. Irwine saw at a glance that she was quite pretty. But he took many more glances to discover in what her unusual charm lay.

"Features and coloring perfect," he said half aloud; and Diana heard him.

"Yes—isn't she beautiful?" she queried, but without enthusiasm.

Mr. Irwine dropped his pince-nez. He had seen all he cared to see. He knew quite well, before Diana told him, that that was the young American who was standing, looking a little bored, in the corner of the box, and that the pretty girl was the wonderful Miss Wallace, of whom Diana had spoken from time to time.

After that he gave himself up to the enjoyment of the play like an old stage-goer. He knew that Diana's eyes rested frequently upon the scene that was passing in the box; he noticed her change color when the beautiful girl turned to speak to her hitherto silent admirer, and he heard Diana draw a deep breath. But Mr. Irwine took care not to look to discover the reason. If he had, he would have seen that a flower from the girl's bouquet had been transferred to the other man's button-hole.

"Flirt!" exclaimed Diana, under her breath, biting her lip till the pain woke her to the sense of what she was doing.

"Eh?" inquired Mr. Irwine absently.

"It's a very pretty play, isn't it?" Miss Terry inquired evasively; and he answered—

"Oh, very!"

Then Diana resumed her watch, and Mr. Irwine his.

"Thank you so much!" Diana said, when they reached home, and old Anne was holding the door open for them. "Won't you come in? Is it too late, really? Then good night, and thank you for a delightful evening!"

The words uttered were quiet, correct, and conventional, but there was no ring of pleasure in them; and the girl went up the steps wearily into the house.

Mr. Irwine sighed as he looked after her.

"Poor little thing!" he said to himself, and then directly afterwards, "Poor dear little soul! She has had a delightful evening, I'll be bound!" And then suddenly he shook his fist vigorously, to the intense amusement of a policeman who was standing watching from the opposite corner.

"I wonder if a naturalised American's head is very hard to break?" the foolish, tender-hearted old fellow muttered. He felt anything but amiably disposed just then as he thought of Mr. Edgar Y. Carr.

* * * * * *

The house was finished. Mr. Irwine, Diana, and its proprietor had just completed their inspection of the premises, and they looked into one another's faces and smiled in silent delight and satisfaction. Mr. Carr spoke first.

"It's all your doing, Miss Terry! The four walls are just like any other four walls, as far as they go; but you have been so painstaking, and are really gifted with such excellent taste—isn't she?"—appealing to Mr. Irwine—"that you have converted the place into a Paradise."

"Quite so!" Mr. Irwine agreed with an emphatic nod. "A Paradise all ready for Eve—and the serpent!"

"Oh, hush!" Diana cried, with a laugh that was slightly nervous. "I can't bear anything worse in a house than a mouse. And then the mouse must be a very nice, one, and quite uncommon, to be worthy to nibble anything that is kept in the corner cupboards I designed."

"There is something for him to nibble now," Mr. Carr said, with a boyish look of triumph. "You never would come to luncheon with me, though I asked you over and over again. So now you will have to take tea with me. Look at the cakes—you wouldn't have them spoilt, or wasted, or left there to encourage mice, would you?"

"Certainly not!" Diana answered, looking at the preparations for afternoon tea. "We will both have tea with you by way of a house-warming."

How delighted the young fellow seemed to do the honors. How well he made the tea, and how nicely he waited on them both himself.

How eager he was that they should both try at least half a dozen sorts of cake, and how he laughed and talked like a schoolboy all the time. Even Mr. Irwine's former prejudice against him began to leave him rapidly.

He no longer wondered at Diana's penchant for naturalised Americans.

"I am glad that the house is ready at last," Mr. Carr said, when at last the reflection which had been prolonged through his efforts far beyond the usual time of afternoon tea was over.

"It seemed a very long time about, I thought, while the work was proceeding, but now the time seems to have literally flown. And my occupation will be gone. What shall I do with myself when there is no longer any one to consult about sage greens and tea-rose tints, and so on? It will be very dull for me."

Diana laughed.

"It is absolutely of no use your seeking our pity, for neither of us has the least compassion to spare for you. But I dare say you will find that, though one occupation may have gone, it will be followed by another very soon."

She looked archly mysterious as she uttered this, and the young man positively blushed.

"Still I am sorry our pleasant work together is finished," he insisted.

Mr. Irwine had promised himself that he would keep all approach to sentiment in the background that afternoon, so he rose at this juncture and looked out at the weather.

"I think, Diana, my dear, that it is going to be an unpleasant evening," he remarked, after careful scrutiny up and down the street.

"Perhaps, if you are quite ready, we had better be going."

Miss Terry having expressed herself as being prepared, there was a little ceremony of thanks and leave-taking at the door, which, however, Mr. Irwine cut short ruthlessly.

"I am so cold that I shall be absolutely cut in two by this wind in another minute," he declared. "Please pity the sorrows of a poor old man, you robust, thoughtless young people!"

Diana was very merry all the way home, much more so than usual. She made little jokes and even one or two puns, a misdemeanor of which, in ordinary circumstances, she would never have been guilty.

But Mr. Irwine was compassionate and ignored her temporary fit of abandon.

"Poor little soul! She is really not responsible just now," he said to himself.

He went into the house with Miss Terry for the purpose of inquiring what she was likely to undertake next.

"I don't know," replied the girl. "There is old Lady Waterbridge's drawing-room. And the De Stuccos have asked me to send them an estimate for their hall and staircase; but I don't feel as if I should take much interest in doing patchy work like that just yet. Having a big house to try my 'prentice hand on has spoilt me," she added, with a slight smile.

"You have made a good thing out of it, though," Mr. Irwine said, rubbing his hands as he held them out to the blaze. "How much have you left for yourself after all expenses are paid?"

"Mr. Carr was very generous and—and extravagant," Diana answered, with a blush. "I think I have made a little over five hundred pounds altogether."

"Then," cried Mr. Irwine promptly, "my advice is—take a holiday, for you need it. Let the Waterbridges and the De Plasters"—"De Stuccos," corrected Diana—"wait. You take a run down to Willowmere. Here—wait a minute! We will ask old Anne what she has to say to that."

Before the girl could stop him he had made straight for the kitchen.

"Anne," he exclaimed, bursting in, "your young mistress has made a hatful of money, and she says she wants to go down to get a breath of country air at Willowmere, only she is so afraid that you may object. So I came down to ask you whether you think you could endure the quiet of the country for a week or two, or perhaps three, now that you have become used to the noise and dissipation of London? Don't sacrifice yourself, my dear creature, I beg! Say exactly what you think."

Anne looked from the excited Mr. Irwine to her mistress and back again.

"What does he mean?" the old woman asked faintly. "Is it true? Are we really going?"

And, looking at her face, Diana had not the heart to say no.

"Yes, we are going," Miss Terry answered, and turned back into the sitting-room, where Mr. Irwine followed her.

"Are you cross with me?" he asked, coming to her side. "My dear child, if you only knew how pale and heavy-eyed you have looked lately, you would not wonder that I am so anxious to see the back of you for a few weeks."

"What made you suggest that I should go down to Willowmere?" Diana asked, with a pout and a frown. "It is rather stupid of you to wish me to go away in the beginning of the season when I have a business to look after. Who will see to it in my absence?"

"I will!" replied the old gentleman, with spirit. "I will write to you every day, and tell you who has been, what the callers have wanted, and all about it. Will that satisfy you?"

"I suppose it must!" Diana answered. "But I would much rather have stayed at work just now."

"Little girls don't always know what is good for them," Mr. Irwine remarked. Then he did an unusual thing for him—on taking her hand in leaving he carried it almost reverently to his lips.

Diana sat alone by the fire for hours after he had left. Anne came bustling in from time to time to ask questions about the delightful journey before them, as to when they were to start, and what they were to take.

"Let it all be as you like," Diana told her. "I feel very tired to-night."

And she was—so exhausted that she felt as if she would be glad to lay her head down and sleep for ever. It was unusual for her to feel so; the girl did not know what was the matter with her. For the first time in her life she saw the future stretch before before her gray and unlovely.

"I can't think what has come over me," she said to herself. "I hope I am not going to be ill. I haven't any pain; but I don't seem to care about anything in the world. Life seems more trouble than it is worth. Why do people have to endure such long uninteresting existences, I wonder? Why are there so many people in the world to whom life is nothing more than a mere cheerless humdrum round?" But she could not puzzle herself about these questions or any others, for she was like a child that is too tired to go to bed.

"Now, do come, there's a dear!" old Anne said at last, coming in at eleven o'clock. "I always tidy up the place; and you've not such a lot of things to pack. We can start right away in the morning, if you like. But you won't be fit to do anything but lie in bed if you sit here any longer. And I declare if you haven't let the fire out!"

Diana rose and wearily stretched her arms above her head.

"I am coming, Anne," she replied, almost meekly. "I am sorry if you have waited up for me. Do you think," she asked suddenly, "that I shall go on decorating other people's houses, and as soon as I get interested in my work and in the people, have to give it up and begin something fresh? Did you ever feel as I do, Anne, when you had just finished something that you had taken a great deal of time and pains over—as if you would never care to do anything more as long as you lived?"

"I felt just like that the day I finished my best patchwork counterpane," Anne returned—"just! For it had taken me pretty nigh two years, as I never had any time except in the evenings; and I had been that particular over it as never was—putting it away in paper every night, and all that!

"And I was always thinking while I was doing it how pleased I should be to get it done! And then, when the last stitch was set, if you'll believe me, I sat with it laid on my table in the kitchen and fairly cried—that I did! It made me feel so lonesome like to think that I shouldn't have any more of it to do in the evenings. And for three nights after that I didn't take no interest in anything. I just sat with my hands in front of me a-twirling my thumbs and thinking how dull it was. But, on the fourth evening I gets out my pieces and starts another quilt. And before I knew where I was I was a-singing over it. There!"

Her young mistress threw her arms round the old woman's neck and kissed her.

"You are a dear old soul!" she cried. "I hope I live to be as old as you, and that I shall be only half as good."

Before she went to bed Diana drew up her blind and gazed out into the street. It was wet and cold, and the policeman wore his oilskin cape. But the girl took no notice of him. She was staring over to that part of the sky which looked down upon Queen's Gate.

"I hope that he will be happy—very, very happy," she murmured. And then for an instant a little flash of triumph shone in her eyes. "I have made the house pretty," she continued—"even she will have to own that!"

CHAPTER V.

IT seemed very strange to be down in Willowmere in apartments. Anne and Diana had decided to stay at the house of a Mrs. Withers, who had once been in service with Miss Terry's mother. The girl had made up her mind that she should hate it all; but, when once she was really down in the country, feeling the fresh air blowing on her face, and with the old familiar surroundings about her, she grew more light-hearted in spite of herself.

There was the chimney-corner in which she had delighted to sit as a child, and the wonderful patchwork valances made of bits of old silks and satins, and decorated with three black velvet cats herring-boned neatly on.

Diana stood by the hearth with her feet resting on the old-fashioned rug made of rabbit skins, neatly stitched together, and smiled to herself at the homeliness and cosiness of it all.

"I declare you have been here only one day, and if you don't look better already!" cried Anne, coming in with the breakfast.

"I feel better," Diana admitted, smiling. "I think I shall be ready to begin my new patchwork quilt next week.

Anne laughed and nodded.

"That's right," she said. "Now have some of this milk; its warm still, and worth all the tea that ever was grown for putting roses on your cheeks. I suppose after breakfast is done you'll be going up to see Mrs. Primmer."

"Yes, I dare say I ought," Diana answered, but she could not help a shadow falling over the brightness of her face. "We shall neither of us feel the better for seeing one another, but I suppose I had better go."

When breakfast was finished, however, the atmosphere looked so clear, there was

so much blue in the sky and such clear sunshine, even if it had but little warmth, that Miss Terry decided on taking a walk instead of making the call she so dreaded.

"I can go and see Charlotte when it rains," she thought; "then possibly I shall be in a more subdued frame of mind. To-day I must walk out over the hills and forget everything except that the sun is shining."

But it was not certain that she managed to do that in spite of her efforts.

It was all very well as long as she was fresh and could keep up a brisk pace, but as she tired, thoughts of the work she had just finished would return to her. Mr. Carr was possibly taking Miss Wallace over the house now. Was he—— Then she suddenly bit her lip and turned scarlet.

"I won't think of it," she declared to herself, "I won't, I won't!"

Thoughts, however, are hard to control. In the end she found it harder to struggle with her than to let them have their own way.

Her head was held very low when she came back to the little cottage, and, despite her long walk, she had not much relish for her dinner.

The "tired" feeling was creeping over her again. She tried to shake it off by having recourse to the cottage library; but the book she found there were not exhilarating. Young's Night Thoughts and the Child's Companion were the only light literature she could discover, and she was hardly in the vein to appreciate either of those works. Finally she went up-stairs to her room and lay down and tried to sleep.

"It is my holiday," she told Anne, as she was mounting the stairs. "and I am not ashamed of being a little lazy."

"The young want a power of sleep," Anne replied consolingly. "You go and rest, my dear, and I will wake you for your cup of tea."

But Diana could not rest. She tried to close eyes and ears to every sight and sound, to make her mind a blank. But it was all in vain, for she tossed and turned restlessly from side to side. Presently, to her dismay, she found there were tears stealing down her cheeks. She brushed them away angrily, but there were more to follow. She could not stem the torrent, and she gave up the attempt, hiding her face beneath the counterpane—a patchwork one, very much like a distracted rainbow—and sobbed till she was startled at herself and her own vehemence.

"I am silly!" she exclaimed. "I—I can't think why I behave so. I never was so foolish before. I suppose I must have been overworking myself." Then she had to surrender herself to the tide of her "foolish tears" and let them have full vent.

She did not hear a tapping on the front door, which was as near an approach to a double knock as could well be managed with the handle of an umbrella, nor did she hear the inquiry of Miss Terry was at home, nor even old Anne's entrance into her room till she felt her hand on her shoulder, and started almost guiltily at the touch.

"Is—is tea ready yet?" the girl asked, keeping her face hidden.

"'Tain't but just half-past three," the old woman explained; "and I wouldn't have disturbed you, only that it's Mrs. Plimmer as has come. She's sitting down-stairs bolt-upright, and as fine as f'ippence, with all her Sunday-go-to-meeting things on. Put on something pretty, there's a dear, before you come down, just to show her you are as good as her any day!"

"Oh, fie Anne," Diana ejaculated, trying to smile; "that is nice advice to give me!"

"Heaven forgive me if I'm wrong!" the old servant observed, as she took down Diana's prettiest gown frow its place in the old-fashioned cupboard, which was so large that it was almost like a second room. "But I never know her make herself that smart unless she meant some mischief by it—though it wasn't often we was treated to the sight of her best in the old days!"

"Please go down and tell her I will be with her directly," Diana begged: and she was thankful when the door closed again and she was alone.

She got up and looked at herself in the glass. She had cried till her eyelids were red and her features swollen.

"It does not matter," she said, as she stared at her own reflection. "Nobody cares except myself. I was born to be useful in this world, I suppose, and I must try to fulfil my mission—ornamental I shall never be."

Then, without any warning, another powerful burst of hysterical weeping seized her. She bowed her head down to the table first, then she gradually slipped on to her knees. She was struggling against her passion still, but it was beyond her to subdue it. She thought of trying to pray for help, and her quivering lips formed the first sentence or two.

"Oh, Lord, please help me! I can't think why——"

And then she clenched her hands in an agony of shame, she tried to hide her burning face with them, even from the sight of the sky itself.

She felt that if she could have sunk into the earth at that moment she would have been thankful. She was not faint or ill, but there was a wild throbbing at her heart; her pulses were beating strongly, and she hated herself for her own force and vitality.

She did not attempt to pray again, but she did wish herself dead or that she had never been born.

"Ain't you ready?"

It was Anne's voice at the door, and Diana scrambled to her feet.

"In one minute!" she cried. "Don't come in!"

"You arn't ill, my lamb!" asked the old woman solicitously.

"My—my head aches," Diana answered huskily; and it was quite true, for her temples had never throbbed so in the course of her whole life as they did then.

Miss Terry fastened on her dress somehow, after bathing her eyes hastily; then she went down stairs to meet the keen scrutiny of her sister Charlotte in much the same manner as she would have gone to the block if that had been her doom, with quite as strong a sense of pain and repulsion, almost dread, and yet, feeling compelled to act as she did, her hitherto uneventful existence had risen almost to the experience of tragedy during these last few hours.

"Dear me, Diana, how ill you look!" Mrs. Primmer exclaimed, as she rose to greet her sister.

"Mr. Irwine very kindly wrote and told me that you were coming, and what a success you were making in town, but I can see that you have been overworking yourself, as he says. You want your tea"—Mrs. Primmer wanted here—"you look quite worn out. Why did you not write and tell me how well you were doing? You might have known the interest I should feel in your prosperity."

The girl stood staring at her visitor. She felt too much stunned and dazed with her own pain to understand the change in the other's manner.

"I have a headache," she said irrelevantly.

"Is it true that you have really cleared five hundred pounds by your half year's work?" Mrs. Primmer asked, bending forward with eager face.

Diana twined her hands tightly together as she answered, in a voice that had nothing but an unnatural sadness in its tone:

"Quite true."

After that Diana made a stronger effort than before to keep her thoughts from concentrating themselves on the house in Queen's Gate. To herself she argued that it must be the employment she missed; it was the lack of having no one absorbing interest to occupy her time from which she was suffering. And, if she suffered from low spirits, she did not pray to be relieved, for her one attempt had been so unsuccessful.

Miss Terry went a good deal to her sister's, and she wrote a good many letters to Mr. Irwine and other people, principally about work that she had undertaken. She found, rather to her amusement, that Mrs. Primmer had set her heart on having her own ugly villa residence beautified up to date.

She was just the woman to take advantage of having an opportunity of getting a thing done for next to nothing, and she was most hospitable in managing to have patterns and papers at hand on the choice of which she wished for Diana's opinion.

A few months ago the girl would have been intensely amused at her own promotion from a tiresome nonentity to a person of some importance. But now she had to rouse herself to get up the least interest in Mrs. Primmer's house, or anything else for that matter.

Mr. Irwine's letters were the chief pleasure of each day, for he had entered heartily into her work in her absence. Of course he did nothing more than receive the people who called with the hope of seeing Miss Terry, and referred every question to her to settle; still, he did her good service. For it was not difficult for the visitors to perceive that they were honored by the attention of a gentleman of rare ability and learning, and this reflected credit in turn on Diana.

In none of his chatty delightful letters—he had not lost the art of letter-writing, as most people have done in this delightful age of railroad speed and general hurry—did he mention Mr. Carr's name. Diana tried to think that she was glad of it.

What further interest need she take in the man?

She had completed her work for him and turned it out well, and been liberally paid. There the matter was at an end, of course.

Yet she had some difficulty to retain herself from glancing quickly through Mr. Irwine's letters, before she read them carefully, to see if the familiar name occurred anywhere. But it never did. Mr. Carr had called on the old gentleman to ask for Miss Terry's address, and he had given it to him, although he did not mention the fact.

"If he writes, she will find it out for herself," he decided; "and, if he does not write, so much the better."

So it happened that Diana was sitting by the little latticed window of the sitting-room on one wild and windy morning, when, looking up on hearing the click of the little gate, she saw a tall form, enveloped in an ulster, come striding down the path between the bushes of lad'a-love and flowering currants, whose buds were just beginning to blush rosily.

For an instant she doubted her own eyes. Then she heard an imperative rapping with knuckles on the front door, and all at once she found that she was trembling so that she could not rise, and that her soul was filled with an absorbing longing to get away and hide herself anywhere. But there was no time for that, even had she possessed the strength at that moment, for it was but the shortest of steps from the front door to the little parlor in which she sat, and the next minute he was standing before her.

Diana felt that she must make a tremendous effort to hide her agitation, and in the moment of need her courage and strength returned to her, as they often will at a critical moment to the weakest and most nervous of women. If anything, her greeting was a little too self-possessed and cold.

"How do you do? Won't you sit down?" she asked, extending her hand; then, as he made no answer, she added, "What a disagreeable day."

Mr. Carr looked down at her, still without speaking, and, in spite of herself, her face began to flush. Then she saw the trouble in his eyes, and altogether forgot the part she intended to enact.

"There is nothing wrong—no trouble—is there?" she inquired hastily.

He turned away before replying, crossed the room to the fireplace, and leaned against the mantlepiece.

"I thought I would come and tell you," he answered slowly. "I have been wanting to talk to you about it—not perhaps that there is much to interest you. I have been a fool. That's all."

"What is it?" Diana asked again. She had crossed the room to his side without noticing what she did; she felt full of sympathy for him, though she hardly knew on what account. "Have you lost your money?" she persisted. He had been so foolishly generous and extravagant that if he had said yes, it would not have surprised her at all.

Oh, no," he said, with a short laugh, "that's all right! It's only that—that she won't look at me!"

"What?" demanded Diana sharply.

"She won't have anything to say to me," he continued. "She is quite right, I dare say, for she is worthy of a far better position than I could ever offer her. There is no station in society that she isn't worthy to fill," the poor fellow added, with a perceptible groan.

"And she won't marry you?" Diana queried. "Are you certain there is no mistake? Did you make her thoroughly understand? You are sure!"

The girl would have been horrified if she could have realised the intense interest conveyed in her inquiries; but she was too much interested in Mr. Carr's distress to think of that.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LITTLE BETTY was at her first evening entertainment, where everybody was strange to her. She grew homesick, and, with tears in her eyes, begged her hostess to send her home. As she was starting a smile shone through her tears, and she said: "Good-bye, Miss Smith! Mamma told me to be sure and tell you I had enjoyed myself."

Bric-a-Brac.

HAIR-BREADTH.—The word "hair-breadth," now are need for an infinitesimal space, was once a regular measure. It was the width of 16 hairs laid side by side.

CATS.—Cats can smell even during sleep. When a piece of meat is placed immediately in front of a sleeping cat's nose the nostrils will begin to work as the scent is received, and an instant later the cat will wake up.

MASQUERADES.—In ancient Rome masqueraders at the mid-winter festivals were common, and the "Mumming," practiced in France, Spain and England in mediæval times was probably a relic of this Roman practice.

THE SHOVEL FISH.—The shovel fish uses his nose as a tool to make his living. By means of his nasal protuberance he turns over the mud of the bottom of the sea and unearths the worms and small shell fish on which he feeds.

BELLS.—The customer of christening or "blessing bells" is very ancient. Some say it was introduced by Pope John XIII. in 972, but it is evidently of an older standing as express prohibition of the practice is in a capitular of Charlemagne in 789.

IN JAPAN.—Japanese auctions are said to be conducted in the following manner. Each bidder at an auction writes his name and bid on a slip of paper, which he puts in a box. When the bidding is over, the box is opened, and the goods declared the property of the highest bidder.

IVORY.—Most of the ivory that comes to the market is "dead"—that is, ivory taken from animals long since dead, and which has been stored away by the natives for years. There is no danger in africa of the supply being exhausted for several generations, at least.

BELLS.—Bells are said to have been known in China nearly three thousand years before the birth of Christ. The Greeks and the Romans never used bells of a large size; yet the hour of bathing and the opening of the market-places were advertised daily by ringing bells.

RUSSIAN PAPERS.—The first Russian newspaper was published in 1703, and Peter the Great was the senior editor. The imperial autocrat not only took part personally in its editorial composition, but in correcting proofs, as appears from sheets still in existence, on which are marks and alterations in his own hand.

TREES.—In Switzerland there is a law, it is said, which compels every married couple to plant six trees immediately after the ceremony, and two on the birth of every child. They are planted on commons and near the roads, and being mostly fruit trees are both useful and ornamental. The number planted amounts to ten thousand annually.

THE INDIAN'S BOW.—The California Indian's bow is made from the white or sapwood of the cedar, the outer side of the tree being also the outer side of the bow. The stick is scraped and polished with sharp pieces of obsidian, roasted in ashes and bent into shape. Their arrows are made of button willow twigs, of the buckeye and canes.

AN OLD REQUEST.—Two hundred and seventy-five years ago, Isaac Duckett left the sum of $2000 to encourage faithfulness and fidelity amongst domestic servants. The necessary qualification was that they should remain for seven years with the same master or mistress in the parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn, London. This legacy-reward is still paid, and at the last prize-giving eleven servants out of twenty-three received $50 each. The remaining twelve were disqualified for various reasons.

ON HIRE.—At one time the Swiss used to hire themselves as soldiers to the kings of other countries. They were thus known as "mercenaries" and were thought none the better of for accepting such service. But though this system of letting themselves out on hire has long since ceased to exist, one finds a memorial of the practice in France in the word suisse, which means a porter, or church beadle. At the porter's lodge of the Embassy in Paris once could be read the words "Demandez au suisse"—"Inquire of the porter."

WHERE KISSING IS UNKNOWN.—Excepting where they have adopted the habit from other more civilized folk, kissing is unknown to the Australians, New Zealanders, Papuans, and Eskimo. It is curious that peoples of the tropical South Seas and the icy North should possess this solitary point of agreement. Instead of kissing, they rub noses together. It has been noticed, however, that when they have acquired the kissing habit, they stick to it.

THINGS RARE.

BY S. C.

Up the shining window-pane
  Grows a vine, with tendrils creeping
Ever higher toward the light,
  In the sun its leaflets keeping.

Trim it, train it as I will,
  Still it turns, with every morning,
Toward the light; a lovely thing,
  All the spacious room adorning!

When bright summer days have come,
  With their wealth of blooming roses,
We shall scarcely mark the vine,
  Nor the beauty it discloses.

Just because 'tis rare and frail,
  Now we watch its graceful twining,
Noting, for its tender sake,
  Morn by morn the sun's first shining.

A WAR WITH FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

He looked down at her with polite concern.

"Have I tried you," he asked. "I thought you were getting so well and strong!"

"I am not a bit tired," she replied, looking frankly into his eyes. "The fact is, a friend of mine whom I have not seen for ever so long has just come, and I want dreadfully to go and talk to him!"

The Captain laughed as if he were a little disconcerted at the coolness of the request; but, following the direction of her glance, he saw Tryan, and changed his tone at once.

"Is it Cambray you want to go to?" he said, offering his arm. "Then I give in without a grumble. The poor old fellow has been so awfully down on his luck lately that I couldn't grudge him anything—not even the best waltz of the evening—though it was an awful snub, Miss Bright!"

"You shall have another instead," she promised him, "later on. He looks very lonely there alone! How are you, Mr. Cambray?"

Tryan turned swiftly at the sound of her voice.

"Thir—Miss Bright!" he cried, evidently taken off his guard at sight of her.

Just for a moment the delight and surprise in his glance, as he took in the dainty elegance of her dress, her sweet attractiveness, betrayed him. Then he recovered himself and treated her with due decorum.

Captain Miller thought he knew what that sort of thing meant.

"I say, Cambray," he said, in his smooth easy tones, "you might take Miss Bright downstairs and show her the ice grottoes. She's dying to see them; and I'm wanted just at this moment in the commissariat."

And, before either of them knew how it had been managed, Thir and Tryan found themselves racing quietly along a shadowy passage on the ground floor of the building, which the indefatigable ball committee had transformed into a series of mimic caverns, as cool retiring places from the warmth and brilliance of the dining room.

Just now they were all deserted; everybody had flocked upstairs for the last dance before supper. The music came down to them chastened by distance into a smooth plaintive melody.

"Pretty, isn't it?" said Tryan, referring to the quaintly-contrived recesses on either side; and then the absurdity of starting a conversation with her in such a fashion seemed to strike him, and he faced round and spoke in the old way. "I hardly knew you, Thir. What have you done to yourself to-night?"

"Done to myself?"

"You took my breath away! I thought it was the idealised spirit of the Thir I used to know. You look—lovely!"

"It was the joy of seeing you again, Tryan."

"Ah, Thir, you must not talk like that to me; you'll turn my head!"

"Why not? Mayn't one be glad to see a very dear friend after a three-months' separation, Tryan?"

He shook his head and smiled down at her.

"I like these little caves," she observed, choosing not to see the unspoken remonstrance. "Would it be permissible to sit down for a little while, do you think?"

"Aren't you going to dance the next dance?"

"No—I'm going to sit it out with you."

"But I shall have half the men up-stairs thirsting for my blood!" he declared, as she seated herself in the last grotto.

She raised her eyes to his in tender expostulation; and he thought, with a throb of hopeless pain, that she had never looked sweeter than now, with that gentle womanliness in her glance.

"Don't you talk to me like that, Tryan dear," she said pleadingly. "I don't mind it from those men up-stairs; but from you—it makes me feel as if you had no reverence for our past trouble!"

"Heaven forbid that you should think that!" he replied, with quiet fervor, leaning against the dividing partition which shut off the end grotto from the others, thus hiding her as far as possible from the observation of people passing by near the staircase.

"You are changed, Tryan," she said, sighing very softly; "you are thinner."

"Well, it hasn't been fat times with me just lately, you see," he replied. "Those lawyer-fellows are enough to wear any man to fiddle-strings, with their prosing about covenants and leases and clauses! I can't make out why they will not get the business finished and let me go away."

"The Hall is sold, then?" she queried, fingering the ornaments on her fan as she spoke.

"Oh, yes—it is sold right enough," he replied—"and at a very much better price than ever I expected it would fetch! It was all signed and settled weeks ago, with the exception of the final formal transfer; and about that there seems to be some mysterious hitch. My lawyer tells me he is absolutely certain the thing is all right, and yet they go on from week to week putting off the final signature. It is abominably annoying!"

"So" and she spoke hesitatingly, "I suppose—that very likely business matters keep you so occupied you never think of your friends—of me?"

"They do not" he said, speaking with sudden feeling. "You are wrong there, Thir! I miss you just like that, little girl—'every day and all day long.' There is never a waking moment in my life that my heart is not hungering for you—ay, and scarcely a sleeping one either! I never feel a bit more down than usual but the thought comes, without any effort of will on my part. If Thir were here, how these troubles would seem to lighten! My first idea, when I heard of that extra thousand being offered for the old Hall, was that I would take you to Canada with me at once. Let the news be glad or sorry, let the time be day or night, nothing ever happens without bringing a thought of you with it! Not miss you, Thir dearest? Why, my whole life, my whole existence, is one aching longing! If you could know how I miss you!"

His feelings had gradually carried him away further than he had meant to go. When he finished speaking, his breath was coming fast, and his voice was vibrating with grief and sorrow. He turned his face from her that she might not see how thoroughly his emotion had mastered him; but she rose and put a trembling little hand upon his sleeve, forcing him to look round at her.

"If you feel it like that too, Tryan," she whispered tremulously, her eyes glowing with excitement, "if we both feel this separation so bitterly, why should we endure it? Surely anything would be better than this long-drawn-out wretchedness! Let me join you in Canada, and risk everything!"

"Do you know what you are saying, child?" he asked huskily, almost mad with the yearning to take her in his arms and whisper his glad consent to her unselfish offer.

"Do you know exactly what it is you would risk if I let you do as you say? Do you think Dora Valland's malice is to be checked by a few thousand miles of ocean? Are you willing to run the risk of being known as the wife of a reputed murderer?"

"Yes, Tryan," she murmured, raising herself as she spoke until her soft hair touched his ear and her breath felt warm upon his cheek—"yes, Tryan—more than willing, dearest, if I risk it with you!"

"Oh, Thir, Thir," he cried, pressing her to his breast in a passion of mingled joy, pain, pride, and despair—"oh, Thir, my little Thir—only to have known such a love is worth all the pain it has brought!"

"And you will let me come out to you—there—in Canada," she said presently, when he had mastered himself again and put her back into her seat—"you will let me come and help to smooth away the rough places in the new road you're going to lay down for yourself?"

He tried hard to smile, so that she should not know how it tortured him to resist her; but, though she saw through the smile and guessed at a great deal that lay beneath it, she did not dream of his bitter anger against himself, his contempt for his own lack of self-control.

"Dear little girl, it is no good! For myself I would risk it ten times over; but do you think I could face it for you? To see you shunned and looked at shyly, and to know that it was my doing! Thir"—he set his shoulders back and smiled again, almost sincerely this time—"we must not say another word on this impossible matter! If you do—— Hush—there is somebody coming down here! Steady yourself!"

He turned and went forward a few steps to meet the intruder, leaving her behind the partition; but she had plenty of courage upon occasion, and, when she heard Teddy's voice greeting Tryan, she went out at once and offered her own explanation.

"Now, Teddy, I won't be abused! I was engaged to him for the supper dance, Mr. Cambray, and you have been so interesting with your talk about your Canadian plans that I forgot all about it. Is the dance quite over? Then we will all go in to supper together. You shall have another dance later on, Teddy."

"Thank you!" said Teddy rather curtly, putting her hand within his arm with the air of a man who meant to claim his rights. "Come along, Tryan; Miller has kept a place for you at our table. It was he who put me on your track, though he might just as well have done it a quarter of an hour sooner, when he heard me asking if any one knew where you were!"

Thir's partners after supper found her rather less talkative and sprightly than she had been before; but she was as sweet and winsome as ever, Major Darncombe thought, when he had had his second dance with her. Indeed it was so evidently "a case" with the Major that Mrs. Greenbury felt compelled to take pity on him.

"Captain Miller and Mr. Poplett are coming over to luncheon the day after to-morrow," she told him, in a confidential undertone, when she found him near her during the operation of wrapping up—"just to see if we have survived the fatigue. Ask them to make room for you in the dog-cart; we shall all be very glad to see you!"

"That's awfully good of you, Mrs. Greenbury!" he replied. "They'll have to bring me, room or no room! At any rate, I'll come!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THIR was considerably surprised when, on the Saturday morning, Mrs. Greenbury herself put in an appearance at Dale Cottage. The real object of her outing, she said, was to have a dress fitted on at Mrs. Wellcome's—next door—and she thought she might as well look in and secure a pleasant companion for the walk home.

Thir had been openly debating the question whether she should go to the luncheon-party or not, and had nearly decided against it; but Mrs. Greenbury was very persistent.

Thir was wearing a dress of small shepherds' plaid—one of her own particular favorites—but her new chaperon declared it was too colorless for such a cold day, and hurried her laughingly upstairs, with orders to put on her ruby colored homespun, and to make haste about it.

"You will wonder why I made a point of such a trifle," said Mrs. Greenbury presently, as if she felt some excuse was necessary to warrant her interference; "but I want everything and everybody to be at their brightest and best to-day. Muriel has come to her senses at last, and given Captain Miller his answer. It is far better than she deserves; very few men would have stood so much nonsense!"

"Oh, I think he understood her better than we did all the time," returned Thir; "he knew her little tricks were more fun than temper!" It was odd, she was saying to herself, how old this news of Muriel's engagement made her feel. No doubt it was because that sort of thing was all over and done with for her.

The Pantiles and everybody in it had a general air of being en fete on this bright winter day. Thir caught the infection before she had been in the house half an hour; and, when Dora Valland arrived in time for the three o'clock tea—taken thus early to give Captain Miller daylight for his seven mile drive home—not even her unbending dignity made the faintest impression on the high spirits of all present.

"Is that the young lady that Pops worships so devotedly from a respectful distance?" inquired Major Darncombe of Thir, in a discreet whisper, when they entered the drawing-room for tea, and found Dora, with Pops in attendance, the centre of a group near the fire.

From the moment of his arrival, the Major had attached himself to Thir, much to Teddy's disgust, who, prevented by the laws of hospitality from openly attempting to cut out a guest of his own, had done the next best thing possible by playing all the afternoon a persistent third to their tete-a-tete.

"He has good taste for a youngster," continued Major Darncombe; "and, what is more, he has plenty of courage. Sit here on this cosy little couch—won't you, Miss Bright? There's room only for two; but Greenbury and I will take it in turns to sit beside you."

"Rubbish!" exclaimed Teddy, his face flushing, from an uncomfortable suspicion that he was being made fun of. "I can get a chair."

"Give us some tea first, Teddy dear," pleaded Thir; "and don't forget to ask Jean for my extra lump of sugar."

"She is certainly a grand creature," observed the Major again, looking across the room to the group around the fire, and examining Dora with a quietly critical air which Thir found exceedingly amusing—"quite a Juno, by Jove—a marble Juno, I should say! There is not much feeling there. Pops is decidedly a very brave lad!"

"Why, so?" queried Thir.

"For daring to make love to that majestic iceberg. I can't think how he sets about it; she would freeze my heart with that cold smile and that inanimate manner! I like something with a pulse in it, Miss Bright. Give me before all your marble statues a creature that lives and breathes! By Jove!" he muttered, suddenly dropping his voice to a conscience-stricken whisper, as Dora slowly turned her head and looked at him searchingly and comprehensively. "I say, now don't think she can have heard what I was saying, do you?"

"Perhaps," said Thir, smiling mischievously. "What harm if she did? Everybody likes to be admired."

"But I called her a marble statue," he whispered abjectly, "and that is just the sort of a thing a woman hates to be called. She'll be revenging herself on me by not letting Pops ride for me next week. He's my mount, you know, in our steeplechases. Have you ever seen him ride a race? The best gentleman jockey in the regiment! Come and see him win the race for me at Boxside next week, will you? Say the word, and I'll talk Mrs. Greenbury into getting up a party."

"That would be real nice!" she said. "I have never in my life seen a race."

"That is an understood thing, then. Miller and I will work the oracle between us. You must have something on my colors, Miss Bright, just for the sake of bringing me luck."

"Have something on?"

"A bet, you know. I can't lay against my own horse," he added, jocularly, as Teddy came up with the tea; "but here's Greenbury—he will bet with you, and be willing to give you heavy odds against my chance."

"Not I!" returned Teddy good-humoredly. "Let the best man win, whoever he is; besides, in any case I wouldn't bet against Pops."

"What is the move over there?" inquired Major Darncombe, as there was a little stir at the other end of the room. "Pops is looking as if he were already past the post, three clear lengths ahead of everything!"

"He is going to walk home with Miss Valland," replied Teddy quietly.

Major Darncombe laughed, and turned to Thir.

"Now am I in my enemy's power!" he said, in pretended alarm. "What shall I do if Pops comes back and tells me he has decided to give up racing altogether, as being too godless an amusement for Miss Valland's chosen?"

"You yourself will have to ride, I apprehend," said Thir, innocently; and Teddy laughed, as if the suggestion were a good joke.

"I ride!" echoed the Major, with a comical expression of dismay. "Do you know that my riding weight is nearer fourteen than thirteen stone?"

"Is that much?" she inquired, "We count by pounds on our side. How much is a stone? Fourteen pounds, isn't it?

Now go slow, and let me reckon up; that wants a good level head for figures."

"Well, at any rate, there's close on three stone difference between Pops and me," he replied. "By-the-bye, Greenbury, what's your weight?"

Thir did not hear Teddy's answer; she had caught the sound of Tryan's name from the other side of the room, and was trying to hear what was being said.

"Never even saw him until supper-time," Jean was saying, "and then he marched quietly up to our table with Thir and Teddy, and we found he had arrived an hour before. He looks very weary and worn. I think living in Hull tries him a great deal."

Dora, standing by the fire, putting on her gloves, turned again towards the end of the room where Thir was sitting, and gave her a significant glance, which Thir met with an indifference that amounted to absolute contempt. Noting the cool, calm look of unconcern, Miss Valland grew suddenly impatient with her obstinate glove, and, plucking at it viciously, ripped it across the back.

Thir smiled an exasperating smile as she turned her attention again to her nearest companions—a smile which seemed to say, "Very good! Better the glove than me!"

Miss Valland did not go over to that particular corner to make her adieux, contenting herself with a stately bow as she left the room; to which in response Thir called out a gay defiant "Good-bye!"

"Take particular care of Mr. Poplett," she said, with a laughing glance at Major Darncombe. "He is that precious to us all just now, we'd break our hearts if any harm happened to him!"

Poplett, holding the door open, flushed a little and laughed back at them all. He was very happy just then, and he did not in the least mind their seeing it. Thir always remembered him afterwards exactly as he looked that moment, smiling back at them with the open door in his hand, his blond head well thrown back, his fair face faintly flushed, and his blue eyes bright with candid happiness.

"Don't wait for me if I'm not back exactly to time, Miller," he said; "you can pick me up as you pass the Rectory."

"Miss Bright, how could you?" murmured the Major in Thir's ear. "You've just said enough to put that saint-like young person on to Pops' track!"

"Oh, I wouldn't worry!" replied Thir equably. "Mr. Poplett is not in the mood this afternoon to talk about horses and racing. Isn't he a nice boy? Do you know, I'm downright in love with him!"

"I wonder what Pops has done to deserve such bliss!"

"Well, you see, it's just a case of sour grapes," she returned. "You remember, Teddy, the day I first saw him at a tennis-match here? I just adored him straight away; and he adored Miss Valland in the same all-forsaken fashion—and so there you are, you know! Perhaps, if Miss Valland refuses to have anything to do with him, there may be a chance for me even yet!"

Major Darncombe smiled at the gay audacity of the speech. He was wishing very much just then that Greenbury would not "stick so confoundedly close." As a rule, the Major was equal to overcoming any obstacle of this nature; but on this day circumstances were too much for him. To begin with, the line of country was new, and it was an unusual complication to have his host against him.

There was another obstacle, too, of which he was as yet perfectly unconscious, and that was Thir's serene ignorance of his admiration for her. But he told himself that he would have things more his own way at Boxside during the next week. There, in the free-and-easy procedure of a small private race-meeting, he would be able to make plenty of opportunities for himself.

"Do you think, Mrs. Greenbury would bring your sisters over to see Pops ride next week?" he inquired of Teddy. "If she would get up a party, I'd borrow Fulton's waggonette—it carries a dozen comfortably—and send it over in readiness the night before."

"You can try," returned Teddy rather grumpily, for he knew what it all meant. "My mother does not, as a rule, care much for taking the girls to race-meetings."

"Oh, she could have no objection to a small affair of this kind, my dear fellow! There is none of the usual rowdy element. Let us go over and present our petition now. Come, Miss Bright—you must back me up!"

It was evident, from the way she received the suggestion, that Mrs. Greenbury had no liking for race-meetings; but she knew how to yield gracefully upon occasion, and it ended in Major Darncombe's getting his own way.

Presently, when the dog-cart was waiting and nearly everybody had crowded to the door to admire Captain Miller's smart tandem, Mrs. Greenbury kept the Major back for a minute.

"I want to bring an aunt of Miss Bright's to your races," she said—"quite a pretty, pleasant little woman, but of course not a girl. You won't mind?"

The Major's eyes twinkled as he took both her hands in his and shook them impressively.

"Upon my word, Mrs. Greenbury, you're a regular guardian angel to me! Nothing would give me more pleasure than to meet Miss Bright's aunt!"

And they looked as if they thoroughly understood each other as they said "Good-bye."

After all, Pops returned in time to start with his party. He came hurrying back to them while Captain Miller was still going through his inspection of buckles and straps, and joined the laughing chattering group on the steps.

"I was afraid you would forget my driving coat, Miller," he said in explanation; "it is too cold to-night for a drive in a tweed jacket." And, as he spoke, they saw his teeth were chattering, though his face was flushed and heated from his rapid walk.

"Rather!" agreed Teddy, turning back into the hall with his friend to find the missing garment.

Muriel ran down the steps for a last word to her fiance; and Thir and Jean, left alone for a moment, looked at each other, and said "Poor boy!" very softly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TEDDY came to Dale Cottage on the Monday afternoon to make definite arrangements for the drive to Boxside; and Thir saw directly that he did not like his mission. She was holding wool for Miss Caroline to wind, and Miss Gunter was hard at work at a distant writing table, with contracted brow and resolute lips, going steadily through an alarming heap of unanswered letters which had all to be answered by that day's post.

They would call for Thir at a quarter past twelve on Wednesday, said Teddy; and would she please be ready, and be sure to wear something very warm, as Boxside was a rather exposed place, and the stand accommodation was of a very primitive description? And then he went on to the second part of his mother's request. There was a seat to spare in the wagonette, and would Miss Gunter or Miss Caroline accept it.

This invitation was at first met with a refusal from both ladies.

"Candidly, Teddy," said Miss Gunter, pausing in her writing, "I detest races! I think it is the most uninteresting, unintellectual form of amusement ever devised by the mind of man! Tell your mother I am much obliged to her for the invitation, as well as for her kindness in taking Thirza, but, for myself, nothing would induce me to waste a day on such a business!"

Having delivered her ultimatum, she returned to her writing-match against time with redoubled vigor.

"Then, aunt Carry, you come!" pleaded Thir. "You are always talking about the inferiority of your intellect, take advantage of it for once, and get a little fun out of it!"

"My dear, I have not been to a race-meeting since I was a girl!"

"So much the more reason why you should come now! I know you are just as frivolous and fond of fun as I am; you have grown quiet and sedate only because that is aunt Polly's way, and because you've got into the habit of meekly following where she leads. Now just throw aunt Polly over this time, and follow my lead instead! I should love to have you come; I know it would do you good! Talk to her, Teddy!"

"But a race-meeting is such a gay affair, dear, and my winter bonnet——"

Thir pounced upon the speaker with a shriek of delight and stopped her protest with a kiss.

"You lovely conceited old spinster!" she cried. "Hark at her, Teddy! The only reason she has against coming is that she is afraid of being cut out in the matter of head-gear by us girls! That settles it, Miss Caroline Gunter! Go to this race-meeting you must! And, as for the head-gear, my dear, I'll make you a bonnet this very evening which shall be the envy of every female at Boxside!"

"But, Thir," began Miss Carry, looking considerably startled at finding her excuse so unceremoniously thrust aside.

"But me no 'buts,' Miss Caroline Gunter, ma'am!" cried Thir, gaily. "To this meeting you go! I've a very special reason of my own for wishing you to go!"

"And I know my mother is set on having one of you," put in Teddy diplomatically; "and, since Miss Gunter is so decided——"

"Yes—it is quite settled!" declared Thir; and, though Miss Caroline sighed resignedly, she also smiled.

"You are abominably self-willed, Thir," she said; and Thir nodded her head and acquiesced in the accusation with the greatest amiability.

"This is nothing to what I'm going to be for the future!" she asserted. "I've been feeling the need of some settled purpose in life lately; now I've found one. I'm going to resuscitate you, aunt Carry. I'm going round along with you to every gaiety in the neighborhood; and I'll marry you well before the end of the year."

"My dear Thir!" cried poor Miss Carry, with flushed cheeks; while Teddy burst into hearty laughter.

"I don't see why you should take it like that, Teddy," observed Thir, with an air of mock indignation. "I'm more a woman of the world than aunt Carry is—why, I'm centuries older in everything but mere years. You'll always be a baby, you know, dear," she went on placidly, "while I was born a cute old woman ready made; so we'll just change round a bit, and see how things work that way."

"It strikes me you're talking a great deal of nonsense, Thirza," interposed Miss Gunter from the other end of the room.

"Aunt Polly, I forgot all about your being there!" declared Thir. "I don't see how you can get on with your letters among all this chattering. Let us have tea in the dining-room, Aunt Carry, and leave Aunt Polly in peace. I'll bring hers across to her."

But, after all, it was not Thir who took Miss Gunter's tea to her, for, before it was ready, the afternoon post came in, and brought Miss Carry a communication which needed an immediate reply; so, as soon as she had drunk her own tea, she went to the drawing-room to write her letter, taking her sister's cup with her, and leaving the two young people munching sweet biscuits by the fire.

After her aunt's departure, Thir found Teddy less conversational than ever, and began to wonder if there was anything seriously wrong with him; moodiness was so thoroughly out of his usual line.

"I guess there's something gone wrong with you to-day, Teddy," she said presently; "you aren't a bit like yourself. Have you come to a knot in the wood? Try back, and start your saw afresh! what are you sulky about?"

"This trip to Boxside," he replied promptly. "I can't think why my mother should have given in to Major Darncombe about it. She has always set her face so thoroughly against taking the girls to race-meetings—why should she make this one an exception?"

Thir looked at him in surprise. It sounded as if he thought the Major was making love to his mother.

"But this is a special occasion, Teddy. We're going mainly to see Pops ride, you know."

"Poor old Pop!" said Teddy; and he fell into a gloomy silence again, with his elbow on his knee and his chin in the palm of his hand, staring vacantly into the fire.

Thir, still munching her biscuits, watched him quietly without any further attempts to gain his confidence. If it was his mother he was sulking with, the less said about the matter the better.

"Poor old Pops!" he said again presently, as if his thoughts had been busy with his friend all the time. "He is out of his suspense, at any rate."

"Is he? Oh, Teddy, do tell!"

"Yes; he got his answer on Saturday," said Teddy.

"What did Miss Valland say to him?"—

"She said 'No.'"

Thir laughed a little at the answer.

"Don't think I'm laughing at him," she said; "it was your way of putting it. I'm very sorry for Mr. Poplett."

"So am I. Pops said he knew he was making a fool of himself, but he was bound to go through with it."

"It was rather a pity, I think," Thir murmured regretfully. "What was the good of subjecting himself to the humiliation of a refusal?"

"Not a bit! And yet we're such fools we will do it! I, for instance, instead of taking warning—I'm going to follow his example."

"You, Teddy?" she cried. "You don't mean to say—— Oh, you poor boy, are you in love with Dora Valland too?"

"Dora Valland? No. With you!"—"With——"

"There—have I made as great a fool of myself as the other?"

"You have not made a fool of yourself at all, Teddy. All the same, I do hope you're only having a little joke with me, because——"

"That's enough!" he said curtly, and walked over to the window with his hands in his pockets, whistling softly.

Thir suddenly felt very miserable and guilty. Had she known there was any fear of such a catastrophe as this, she would never have permitted herself so much freedom in her intercourse with Teddy; but she had grown so accustomed to seeing him making himself pleasant and attentive among his own women-folk that she had accepted his constant little services as naturally as they did, without stopping to remind herself that his attentions to her might be prompted by some warmer feeling than brotherly affection. And she had made him wretched.

She looked across at the athletic young fellow in corduroy jacket and gaiters, and racked her brain to think of the right thing to say.

"I believe we're going to have a frost," he observed; "and, if it holds, good-bye to the chances of racing for the day after to-morrow!"

It was a really creditable attempt at commonplace every-day speech, but it was spoken in a tone which Thir knew well—a tone which made it impossible for her to let the affair pass in such a fashion.

"Teddy, you must let me say how sorry I am about this," she began.

"Stuff!" he broke in rudely. "Why should you be sorry? It isn't your fault, you know."

"But I feel as if it were."

"Nothing of the kind! Don't you go thinking that. You forget all about it as fast as you can. There's one question, though, that I should like very much to ask you if I weren't afraid you would think it a confounded piece of impertinence."

"No—I won't do that, Teddy."

He turned round and looked straight at her.

"Well, then, was there ever anything of this kind between Tryan Cambray and you?"

She caught her breath in dismay, and put up her hands instinctively to hide her flushed face.

"What a clumsy beast I am," he muttered penitently. "I go at everything like a bull in a china-shop. I didn't ask from inquisitiveness, Thir; I wanted to—— The fact is, Thir, I have thought once or twice lately that it was possible Tryan cared for you, and I wondered why nothing came of it. I know you too well to think that it was because he was down on his luck—poor old chap!—and I wondered if—you mustn't be angry with me, Thir—I wondered if there had been any mischief-making between you."

He paused, as if he hardly knew whether to go on or not; but a little sound from Thir terribly like a sob soon decided him. He crossed over to her and finished what he had to say in a lower tone.

"If it is that, Thir—if somebody has been setting you against him—let me put it straight. Tryan is one of the best, most honorable, straightest-going fellows in the world; and if anybody—I don't care who it is—has said anything different, they told lies—that's all!"

He had worked himself up into quite a passion against his friend's imaginary traducer. Perhaps it was a relief to be able to work off some of his emotion in this way, which had the advantage of not distressing her and easing his overburdened heart at the same time.

"I've been puzzled by Tryan's downhearted manner ever since he went to Hull," he went on; "I couldn't account for it in any way. I knew there must be something apart from the sale of the Hall and all that; Tryan isn't the fellow to whine over the inevitable; and, besides, he has always known the smash would come the moment his father went. Could you bring yourself to tell me all about it Thir? I'd like to do Tryan a good turn if I could; and I'm not a blind fool, Thir, though I was mad when I thought it was somebody else. I know there's no chance for me against him."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE Princess of Wales has had a tricycle made for her use, of the style of ten years ago. The fortunate possessors of antiquated bicycles will take notice.

LOVE AND FAME.

BY M. M.

Two maids I wooed upon a day,
Both rich in favors all would share;
One, Love, a laughing, winsome fay;
The other, Fame, surpassing fair.

With fervor both I far pursued,
Nor ever thought I wooed amiss;
But, lo! they parted by a feud;
That way went Fame, while Love took this.

Alas! I could not cling to both;
But now was come the hour to choose;
To part from either I was loth,
With this to gain, and that to lose.

"Come, mortal, come with me," said Fame,
With flattering voice that charmed my ear;
"The nation's tongue shall speak thy name,
And thou the victor's crown shalt wear.

Love, like an angel, lingering smiled;
"Ay, woo her, if thou wouldst," she cried.
But Love had conquered; like a child
I followed, and was satisfied.

The Poor Duchess.

BY A. P.

IT WAS really very hard on the poor Duchess, especially after all the toil and labor she had ungrudgingly expended on her unattractive progeny. Her lot had always been hard enough ever since she had been a Duchess; even before her wedding cake had grown stale she had been coping with difficulties—brutal difficulties which it required all her strength of mind to face—and now, when a good share of those difficulties were laid to rest with her husband, the late Duke, in the family vault at Longlands; now, when she had just managed to retrieve the shattered ducal fortunes by bringing off the engagement of her ugly, dissipated son, the present Duke, to Claudia Putnam, the richest American heiress of the season, now for this blow to fall upon her, it was really too bad.

The only balm to her anguish was that it had fallen at Longlands, in the wilds of Yorkshire, and that the whole thing might be hushed up and hustled into oblivion without any one being any the wiser. She had gone to Longlands to recruit after her superhuman expenditure of energy during the London season; her only guest was Claudia Putnam, her son's fiancee, with whom she was busy planning alterations and renovations for the new regime.

But the moment was robbed of all its savor by this horrible catastrophe; this—what else could she call it?—this driveling idiocy of the least plain and most hopeful of her six ungainly daughters She would have kept the hateful story entirely to herself if she could, but her heart was too full for silence, besides, Claudia had her fair share of Yankee shrewdness—she might suggest a brilliant solution of the problem—so, as they sat over a cup of tea in her boudoir, the Duchess opened her new trouble to her future daughter-in-law.

"I'm afraid, Claudia dear," she began, "that we are going to have serious trouble with Henrietta."

Claudia was very fond of the Duchess, so tried to look sympathetic, though with Lady Henrietta, who was wrapped up in parish work, who wore impossible clothes, and did her hair grotesquely, she had no sympathy whatever.

"Dear me!" she replied. "I'm sorry to hear it; I hope she's not sick."

"Sick!" repeated the Duchess, "I wish she were, or anything half so sensible. The fact is she has been and got herself entangled in a most unbecoming love affair."

Miss Putnam opened her blue eyes very wide and set down her teacup with a jerk.

"My!" she exclaimed, "and who on earth has been making love to Henrietta?"

The Duchess lowered her voice.

"My dear," she said, impressively, "it is Mr. Gibson, the curate. She vows she will marry him. Isn't it awful?"

"Rather awful for the curate," thought Claudia to herself; aloud she said, "Have I ever met Mr. Gibson?"

"Certainly not, dear; we do not invite him here. He is not a gentleman."

"Then where did Henrietta meet him?"

"Oh, in cottages and at the school. You see she likes parish work, and I encouraged her, it sets such a good example, and we've always had a married curate before; however, when Mr. Gibson came, I never thought of chaperoning her, because, you see, he isn't a gentleman."

"But, I suppose, Henrietta thinks he will make her a suitable husband?"

"My dear," cried the Duchess, "she can't possibly think so. Why, his father keeps a saddler's shop! He hasn't been to the University. Oh, it's altogether dreadful! and she's as obstinate as a mule about it."

She broke off as the door opened to admit a young man in a shooting suit. He was a plain, insignificant-looking personage, with an air of extreme self approval.

"I've just been telling Claudia about this stupid affair of Henrietta's," went on the Duchess.

"And what does Claudia thinks about it?" asked the plain young man, who was Claudia's accepted lover, and who deposited his long limbs on the sofa beside her and tried to bestow a festive caress on the hand nearest to him.

"I guess, I'm pretty well taken by surprise," said Miss Putnam, drawing her hand out of her lover's reach.

"So'm I," said the Duke, placidly. "I'm dashed if I can imagine what he sees in Henrietta. She ain't pretty; t'other way about, rather; she's got no money; and she's years older than he is. I'm dashed if I'd marry a woman like Henrietta, even if I was a saddler's son. I'm dashed if I could even feel spoony on her."

Miss Putnam looked at him. She was going to marry a man very like Henrietta, and she did not feel very spoony on him; she had accepted him for sundry reasons, love being by no means the first or foremost.

"He must be an awfully susceptible chap," went on his Grace, "to lose his heart to a girl like Henrietta. And he's so obstinate, too, about it; seems as if he really cared about her. I thought, perhaps, it was mostly ambition—her title, and that sort of thing, you know—and I've offered him all my influence in the way of a leg-up to preferment, but he won't hear of it. Funny thing, ain't it? Now, if it had been a girl like you, Claudia——"

"Duchess," cried Miss Putnam, suddenly interrupting her lover, "I have an inspiration. You just send Henrietta away. She can go to Jericho, or anywhere else, for a month or so, and when she comes back the engagement will be broken off. I'll manage it, you bet."

She wouldn't answer any questions. She said she thought she understood the exact lie of the land. They might leave it all to her. So to her it was left, and the next day Lady Henrietta was packed off to a married cousin in South Wales.

The following day, at Lady Henrietta's customary hour. Miss Putnam walked into the village schoolroom. She wore a dainty blue cambric frock, which fitted her as no frock in all Henrietta's lifetime had ever fitted her. The little boys and girls opened their eyes wide to look at her, so did the schoolmistress, and so did Mr. Gibson, the curate, who was hearing the whole school in its church catechism.

"Good morning," said Miss Putnam, sweetly. "I am staying at the Towers. I have come in Lady Henrietta's place this morning. She has gone away for a few weeks, and she would like you all to know it."

She looked round the room as she said it, and finally fixed her eyes on the curate's frank, simple face.

"I hope," he began, hesitatingly, "that Lady Henrietta is not ill. This absence is so un—unforeseen."

"Guess not," said Miss Putnam. "She isn't ill, she never was better in her life; but the Duchess thinks a change will do her a world of good."

"Her Grace is very cruel," murmured the curate.

"I beg your pardon?" said Claudia, blandly.

"I was about to say," resumed the curate, turning to the expectant children, "that as her ladyship is unable to come this morning, you will have to lose the interesting object lesson she generally gives you. I'm sure you will all be very sorry."

"Oh, they shan't miss their object lesson," said Claudia, still more blandly. "I've promised Lady Henrietta to give it to them for her."

The curate had been in the habit of staying for Lady Henrietta's object lesson—to keep order for her, he would have said, had the Duchess questioned her. So he stayed to keep order for Claudia, which was quite superfluous, for if her manner of administering instruction was not of a nature to keep the attention of restless children, there were her fascinating gown and her pretty trinkets, not to speak of the charm of her face to hold her audience spellbound. And when the lesson was over, he had got into the way of walking with her ladyship along the school lane and through the park. He escorted Miss Putnam to-day, because he wanted to ask how long his liege lady's banishment was to last.

"I don't know," was Miss Putnam's reply; "I suppose she won't come back till the Duchess chooses."

"The children will miss her sadly," moaned the curate.

"Guess we must take it up to them," said Claudia, graciously; "I've promised Henrietta to stand as much in the gap as possible.

He gave her a grateful look.

"When shall I come and give another object lesson?" she went on. "To-morrow?"

"Oh, no," said the curate, "to-morrow's geography day. Her ladyship always gives a geography lesson on Thursday.

So Claudia put on another bewitching frock, varied her trinkets, and did her best with a geography lesson on Thursday, which was mainly devoted to a flattering but inaccurate description of the United States.

On Friday she wrestled with sums, and by degrees she learned the whole school routine. She also visited, under Mr. Gibson's escort, one or two of Henrietta's old women, who, he thought, would feel themselves neglected in her absence.

Her fiance laughed at her.

"I see what you're up to," he said; "of course it's a clever move, but it's rather rough on a susceptible ass like Gibson."

"Why do you call him an ass?" asked Miss Putnam, sharply; "because his father is a saddler?"

"It's a splendid opportunity for you to make yourself popular in the parish, dear," said the Duchess. "Of course when you are mistress here you will like to be popular among the people."

"I suppose I shall," said Claudia, musingly.

But in spite of her incipient popularity she would not have the marriage hurried on; she was equally deaf to the Duke's impatience and the Duchess's hints.

"There are such heaps of things to do and to think of before anything can be fixed," she said, vaguely, when her fiance urged the matter upon her.

"Well, get on with the heaps of things, then," he retorted; "and don't trifle away so much time at that confounded school."

And Lady Henrietta was still in banishment in South Wales.

Finally, Miss Putnam's stay at Longlands came to a rather unsatisfactory end, for she went away to London leaving the wedding day unfixed and the hangings for the new drawing room unchosen.

The day after her departure there were two letters for the Duchess; one from the curate, the other from Miss Putnam. She opened the former first, because she felt more curious as to its contents.

"Madam," it ran, "although your Grace did not seriously entertain my proposal for the hand of Lady Henrietta, I feel myself in honor bound to let you know that my eyes have been opened to the folly and unsuitability of the marriage for which I would fain have had your sanction. I have written to Lady Henrietta, explaining, as far as I can, the folly of our past, and begging her to forgive me if she be in any way a sufferer by our mistake. I am leaving Longlands at once, therefore the embarrassment of any further meeting will be avoided.

"Yours faithfully,
"W. GIBSON."

The Duchess heaved a sigh of intense relief. This was Claudia's doing. Claudia was a right-down clever girl. She had certainly spent a great deal of valuable time in treading in Henrietta's footsteps but she had disenchanted Mr. Gibson, and lifted a horrible incubus off the family shoulders. She was really far too good for that stupid, muddle-headed son of hers; still she, the Duchess, supposed that a title was an infinite attraction to a born democrat, so things were, after all, not so very uneven. Then she took up Claudia's letter.

"Dear child," she murmured as she broke the seal.

"My dear Duchess," she read, and with each succeeding line her dismayed astonishment increased: "I'm glad I came to stay at Longlands before I took the irrevocable step to the altar. I don't want to say anything nasty or mean, but, really, I never did care about the Duke; I only accepted him because I thought you'd made up your mind to have me for a daughter-in-law; I should have made him perfectly miserable if I had married him. Mr. Gibson finds, too, that he made a great mistake in thinking he cared for Henrietta. He explained it all to me, and I'm quite satisfied. He and I are going to be married before Advent. I shan't mind having a saddler for a father-in-law.

"Yours always,
"CLAUDIA PUTNAM."

The Duchess threw the letter across the table to her son.

"Read that, Southdown," she said; "we've got Henrietta out of her scrape most splendidly."

It really was too hard on the poor Duchess.

For Eric's Sake.

BY H. W.

IT WAS nearly 3 o'clock in the morning when Norah's carriage drove up to the door of the house in South Audley street. The footman rang the bell, and, alighting, she entered the hall, running quickly upstairs to the drawing room.

Her tall figure was still slight and girlish; her blue eyes wore a look of elation; for her beauty had never aroused greater admiration, her success had never been more triumphant than that evening.

"Has baby been all right?" she asked her maid. "Oh, and can you tell me whether Mr. Fordyce has come home?"

"Mr. Fordyce came home at 10," was the answer. "He has been in the study—"

Not waiting for the end of the sentence, Norah went downstairs again.

"Too bad, Digby. Shabby not to turn up——"

She had begun to speak as she opened the door, but as soon as she saw his face, stopped abruptly.

The room was cloudy with tobacco smoke. Though the June evening was hot, the fire had been lighted and the grate was full of papers burned to cinders; but what astonished her the most was Digby's own appearance. As he stood upright their eyes met for a moment; then his were cast down shamefacedly. He had shaved off his heavy black mustache, transforming his swarthy, handsome face; he wore a shooting suit instead of his evening clothes.

"What is the matter Digby?" she demanded—"if you really are yourself."

"I—I—goodness! I can't tell you, Norah."

Drawing nearer she rested her hand caressingly on his shoulder.

"Anything serious, darling?"

"I've got to make a bolt of it. There's not a minute to lose. To-morrow will be too late. I only wanted to see you. I couldn't go without, happen what might."

"But I don't—I don't understand," she faltered, gazing into his face in bewilderment.

"I've played my game and lost; that's all. For the last four years I've been a—heaven help me! It will be all over the town to-morrow. I lost my last chance to day. My name will be a byword."

Sitting down, she could still stare up helplessly into his pale, haggard face. The diamonds in her fair, brown hair caught the gaslight and sparkled.

"Harford will know everything directly he gets to the office to-morrow," Digby continued. "I must be out of the way before then. Norah, I should like to see the youngster."

Automatically she rose, and left the room, shivering as she drew her rich plush cloak round her shoulders. On her return, she made a charming picture, standing with the 4 months-old child in her arms just as she had taken him from his cot

"Poor little beggar!" muttered Digby, bending over him.

Laying him gently on one of the large armchairs, Norah faced her husband.

"I—I can't realize it yet," she said.

"I have looked forward to nothing else the last four years."

"Before—before you married me?" she demanded. "You know this when you first met me! You knew it, and asked me——"

"I loved you, Norah."

"Love!" she cried, contemptuously.

"And you loved me."

"I loved the man I thought you were. A man who never existed."

"For heaven's sake be merciful!" he said, buttoning his coat.

"You have made me a party to your crimes," she cried, and raising her hands, trembling with anger, she tore from her hair the diamond tiara.

"At least a word of forgiveness," he said, taking up the jewel quietly, and thrusting it in his jacket pocket. "Just a word before we part—it will be forever, Norah."

"I can't forgive you," she answered. "It is no use. I could forgive much; if it

had begun since our marriage, it might have been different. But you deceived me too utterly."

It had fallen upon her like a bolt out of the blue, without a warning sign, at the moment of her supreme success. Henceforth she would be known only as the wife of a defaulting solicitor. Her love seemed to be crushed, together with her hopes.

Long after he had gone, while the child lay sleeping on the chair. Norah stood in the smoky room, half dazed by the recent disclosure, till the day broke, and a new era in her life began.

* * * * *

"Ah, Norah, anything up? Where's Digby?

Major Armistead glanced round the dining room. He was tall and spare, the more noticeably because he always buttoned himself tightly in a long frock coat. His darkly tanned face appeared above a very high collar; he wore an enormous iron-gray moustache. Long a widower, since Norah's marriage two years ago he had lodged near Hyde Park, possessing only a small income besides his pension.

She took his hand and kissed him, then looked out of the window.

"A delicious morning after the rain," she faltered.

"Come, come, you didn't drag me out before breakfast to tell me it was a fine morning, Norah. Little chap all right?"

"Oh, Eric is splendid," she said.

"Then what on earth is it? You're not looking well this morning—too much dissipation. Isn't Digby down yet?"

"He's gone—gone away. He is ruined."

"Ruined! Digby! Bless my——"

"Worse," she continued; "he has committed a crime. You can hardly realize it? Neither could I. But it is true. He has committed a crime. All this," she waved her hands as she glanced round the large, handsomely furnished room, "all this is the result. I am wearing some of the proceeds. I can't stay, father; take me away from it all—me and poor little Eric."

The evening papers were full of the news, and sold largely in consequence. The hue and cry being raised, and a reward offered, a few days later the fugitive was arrested. Tried and convicted in due course, Digby Fordyce was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

* * * * * *

Major Armistead rented a small house, almost a cottage, on the outskirts of the town of Tunbridge Wells, and there Norah lived with her boy. Only 23, she had bidden good-bye to the world; instead of thousands a year, her income consisted of but a few hundreds, and these not her own.

Yet she was not entirely unhappy. Compelled by her altered circumstances to devote herself to the child, he soon afforded a new interest in her life. She watched his developing intelligence, listened for his earliest lisping utterances. The day he first stood alone was a red-letter day. Her father became Eric's guide, philosopher and friend; and later was fought a battle royal to decide who should teach him to read. Major Armistead took his defeat so much to heart that Norah magnanimously gave way, and would sit always working, sometimes laughing, at others half crying, to observe the impatient man's patience.

So for a time time Norah's life went smoothly on. At first the change was appalling; she missed the excitement, the admiration, to which she had become accustomed since her marriage. She had a friend left, and when people called upon her, in ignorance of her history, she was always "not at home."

When Eric was more than commonly winsome, Major Armistead always said the same:

"Pity his father was a scoundrel."

And Norah never demurred. It was the simple truth.

Eric was now 6 years old, tall, thin, delicate, with his father's handsome features and black hair.

"I hope to goodness Digby won't begin to pester us," cried Major Armistead one evening. He was an old man now and inclined to peevishness.

Norah looked up quickly.

"It isn't seven years."

"They don't serve their full time if they behave themselves. In prison Digby would behave himself."

"He will not trouble us, father."

"I don't know. Scamp enough for anything. He may think you will take him back."

"I shall never do that," she replied. "After what passed between us he knows I shall not."

"I hope not, Norah. I hope not, for Eric's sake. Is that Eric coughing?" he added presently.

After listening attentively for a few moments Norah laid aside her work and ran upstairs, where he still slept beside her own bed. The child was feverish. Next day a doctor was called in, and now began a period of intense anxiety till one night the end seemed imminent.

Major Armistead did not undress; at regular intervals he looked into the room, and Norah shook her head despondently. When the morning sun broke through the clouds at 10 o'clock, all the blinds in the little house were drawn down, and the light had gone out of Norah's life.

A few days later she stood with her father—white-haired and bowed now—beside the open grave. The gray clouds hung low, and the October wind blew chilly across the cemetery.

Henceforth she spent many hours there, always alone, since the distance was too great for Major Armistead to walk. She always pictured Eric's grave as a kind of bed, and himself asleep, as she often used to watch him.

"I should like to put up a handsome tomb," said the old man. "It isn't much, but it's all I can do for the little chap. I feel I must do something."

"If we could make some other children happy," Norah suggested. "That is what I should like, to endow a cot in a children's hospital."

Major Armistead entered into the scheme with immense enthusiasm.

"Of course," he said presently, "you must remember that you won't have much to live on after I am gone, dear."

"That does not matter," she answered. "Nothing of that kind matters now. Nothing matters in an empty world. There is nothing left to live for."

"I will write to Ormond street and inquire how much it would cost," said Major Armistead. "We will call it Eric's Cot."

Two days later, going to the cemetery in the afternoon, Norah came to a sudden standstill a few yards from the grave, then hiding herself behind some headstones, watched the shabby-looking man who stood bareheaded at its foot. In spite of his black beard and mustache, in spite of his white, haggard, disfigured face, she recognized him on the instant.

After standing there a few minutes he covered his face with his hands, and presently, stooping, broke off one of the faded flowers from the solitary cross Norah had placed there.

Having stayed until he went away, she also left the cemetery, but on reaching home said nothing to her father. All the rest of the afternoon she busied herself in various ways, her father glancing at her from time to time, wondering what transformed and illumined her face.

Despite her troubles, she was a beautiful woman. Her figure had developed, and albeit sad and grave, her face had retained all its former charm. To night it seemed to Major Armistead like the face of an angel.

At 8 o'clock the postman brought a letter, but when he would have broken the seal, she came to his chair, resting a hand on his arm.

"From the hospital, Norah."

"Father," she said, "I—I have thought of another way."

"Well, let us see——"

"I saw Digby this morning," she faltered.

"Ah, I knew the scoundrel wouldn't leave us alone!" cried Major Armistead.

"He did not see me. He was standing by the grave. Before he went away he stooped and—and broke off a piece of stephanotis. He is in very low water."

"He deserves to be!"

"Yes, he deserves to be. But I—I am afraid he is by way of sinking lower. He looks utterly broken—degraded. He can have no hope in life—nothing to help him upward——"

"Pshaw!" cried Major Armistead. "A man like Digby is bound to sink. Nothing can save him."

"That is a terrible saying," she returned. "I think there is one thing that might, only one—a woman's love."

"Norah!" her father exclaimed, "you're not going to play the fool! All nonsense! You know you don't love the man."

"I—I don't know."

"You never went to see him. You never wrote. You haven't had a kind word for him all these years. To tell you the truth I've wondered sometimes. Of course, he deserves all he got, only some women are such fools."

"Was I too wise?" she asked. "Since Eric's death I feel differently about many things. I am not certain about myself. I see what he has fallen to, but he is still a young man—clever—oh, might there not be some chance for him if——. But I doubt my own strength. I am not sure I can do it. As I watched him at the grave the thought flashed upon me. We talk of a memorial to Eric! Could anything be better than to save Eric's father, body and soul?"

"Too late, Norah, my dear; too late!"

"Ah! but is it—is it over?. If there were not a germ of good in him, would he have come to the grave? You don't know that the cot at the hospital will actually save a child's life, yet you would endow it. So with Digby. He has fallen very, very low; he may be incurable, but is that any reason why I should not make the effort?"

Major Armistead leaned forward and kissed her forehead. For his own part, he sincerely hoped she would never see her husband again; and yet he no more liked to interfere than he would have done with her performance of some religious rite in which he could not participate.

For several days Norah walked to the cemetery at the same hour, but it was not till a few days before Christmas that she saw Digby again. As he stood lost in thought at the foot of the grave she drew near.

"Digby!"

He started like a man whose nervous strength is snapped.

"Norah!"

Instinctively his right hand went up to his cloth cap, as he stepped a few feet away. They stood one on each side of the grave, which was now hidden by young evergreens and plants.

"You have been here before," she said, hardly knowing what to say.

"I did not intend to come again, I saw the announcement of the boy's death. Tell me of him, Norah."

Across the grave she gave him information concerning Eric's short life and last days, and then she asked:

"Why—why did you come to-day Digby?"

"I came in the hope of seeing you. I had no right to put myself in your way—but I am leaving England. I have fallen very low."

He threw out his hands. "You see what I am. The first time I came simply to look on the spot where the boy lay. I saw you had put my name. 'Eric,'" he read from the headstone, "dearly beloved son of Digby and Norah——"

"I hesitated," she admitted. "I hesitated, till I was looking for a text. Then I thought it ought to be there. Where—where are you going?"

"Heaven knows. I neither know nor care. What does it matter? Look at me. Do you think I can sink lower?"

"You can rise higher, Digby. Is it ever too late?"

"Oh," he cried, "I dare say you are right. Sometimes I feel I have it in me. It is memory that throws me back. Norah, you don't know what the utter desolation of it is. Ah, I know; you have lost your child, and he had a scamp for his father; but you don't know the curse of being your own accuser. On all the earth there is not a human being who cares whether I go under or how soon——"

"Yes," she said; "there is one who cares."

He stared at her for a few moments, then leaned eagerly forward across the evergreens.

"What—what do you mean?" he muttered.

Norah held out her right hand.

"Digby," she said, "I will bury the past, and, if you will let me, I will do my best to help you in the future."

"Do you mean you will come—come away with me?"

"For Eric's sake," she said, quietly.

The caretaker of the cemetery stopped to look at the poorly clad man beside the grave, and Norah standing with her hand on his shoulder.

At first Digby shrank from facing Major Armistead; but she nerved him to this as to much besides. It was a little hard on Major Armistead, who had now to look forward to being left alone in his old age. But he was the only one who regretted Norah's decision, which had not been arrived at without misgiving. Norah never regretted it. She had found once more a purpose in life, while Eric's father began a new career that day. And a career which went far to make atonement for the past.

A London medical expert says that an excellent test of whether or not a man is sober is to ask him to repeat the sentence: "The artillery extinguished the conflagration early."

Scientific and Useful.

Gas.—After the gas service is laid on in a house, the force pump should be invariably used to ascertain if there be any leakage; an explosion is frequently the result of neglect of this duty.

Good Glue.—To make glue for resisting fire, proceed as follows: Mix a handful of quicklime in four ounces of linseed oil; boil to a good thickness, then spread on plates in the shade, and it will become exceedingly hard, but may be easily dissolved over the fire, and used as ordinary glue. It resists fire after having been used for glueing substances together.

House Plants.—Saturate the earth around house plants every day with the coffee left over from breakfast. It stimulates them. Plants that have a red or purple blossom will be rendered extremely brilliant in color by covering the earth in their pots with about half an inch of pulverized charcoal. A yellow flower will not be affected in any way by the use of charcoal.

Car Warming.—Experiments for warming passenger cars by a stove, which is placed outside, have been tried on some French railways. It is said that a single stove is sufficient for a whole car, and that the expense is very small indeed, twenty-six pounds of coal keeping up the fire for about two hundred miles. The warmed air circulates inside the car.

Poultry.—No greater mistake is made with fowls than the attempt to keep numerous kinds and give all the same care and food. Very naturally some will do well on it, some hardly pay their board, and others be kept at a loss. The right way to keep poultry profitably is to have but one breed, learn how it succeeds and pays best and then treat it to this formula with unvarying regularity.

Stranded Vessels.—A new invention for stranded or storm-beaten vessels wishing to communicate with the shore consists of a large rubber or sheet metal globe to which is attached a light line. The ball being thrown overboard is carried by the wind to the shore, and is said to make communication quicker and surer than by present methods. In a recent test, we understand, a line was carried ashore across a strong current by a tin sphere less than two feet in diameter.

Farm and Garden.

Reputation.—Talk as we may, to the farmer who has established for himself a reputation for furnishing dairy goods of unfailing and unquestionable high quality there is never lacking a good market for all he can produce, at paying and satisfactory prices.

Large Cabbages.—A correspondent inquires of what use are premiums by horticultural societies for large cabbages, unless it is in localities where cabbages are grown for Sauer Kraut. He thinks that the perfection of a cabbage for an amateur's garden is one that would not exceed eight or ten inches in diameter. He would have premiums for the encouragement of these.

The Well.—If the well is dry dig it deeper and it will not be dry until a drought again occurs that is longer in duration than this. The time to dig a well is when there is a dry season, as one must then go down deeper to reach water. The best wells for providing pure water that is free from surface drainage are those known as "drive wells," windmills or force pumps being used for raising the water.

A Plea for Weeds.—It is hard to find anything in the world that has not a dark as well as a bright side—and that has not a bright spot, no matter how dark the outline may be. And yet one eminent agricultural writer has a good word for the vilest weed. He says the truth is that weeds always have been and still are the closest friends and helpmates of the farmer. It was they which first taught the lesson of tillage of the soil, and it is they which never allow the lesson, now that it has been partly learned, to be forgotten. The one only and sovereign remedy for them is the very tillage which they have introduced. When their mission is finally matured, therefore, they will disappear because there will be no place in which they can grow.

Give Attention to the first symptoms of a Lung Complaint, and check the dreaded disease in its incipiency by using Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, a safe, old fashioned remedy for all affections of the Lungs and Bronchia. The best family Pill, Jayne's Painless Sugar-Coated Sanative.

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Enemies and Friends.

An ill-natured critic, who, from his position, is notorious, if not celebrated, once said, with the most blank astonishment painted on his face, "And I, too, am told that I have enemies." Similarly, that incorruptible patriot, Maximilian Robespierre, complained that his country did not understand him, and that his countrymen avoided rather than caressed him, and in a like way, too, a butcher, with the stain and scent of blood upon his blue frock, and with his knife and steel dangling from his belt, might complain that his sheep did not gambol into his slaughter-house, and that the lamb did not "lick the hand just raised to shed its blood."

But to be a Robespierre one must have perpetrated some judicial murders; as for a critic, he often commits auctorial slaughter. "We cannot make omelets," said the first hero, "without cracking a few eggs." So neither critic nor patriot, nor any else in this world, can jog along without creating a few enemies.

What surprises each of us is the bare fact that he has enemies at all. He does not reflect that if he were the most harmless person in the world, which ten to one he is not, he would still be disliked by some. Between various natures there is a marked and decided antipathy. Our very souls go out and range about the world to meet other projected antipathies; men dislike those whom they have never seen. It is the old story; these wild hatreds, deep dislikes, brutal, savage feelings, rise up in our hearts, and overpower our brains without cause.

This stupid enmity, which we most of us permit ourselves to indulge in, works great evils. Shall we tell the old story of Aristides again? Shall we tell how Demos, the mob, the untaught populace in Athens, was flattered by being permitted to write on a piece of shell the name of a citizen they wanted banished, and how, these shells being thrown into an urn, the man whose name was most repeated fell. This was the first ballot, and Demos liked it.

"Well, one day," says Plutarch, who tells the story charmingly, "an illiterate citizen came to Aristides, whom he took for some ordinary person, and giving him his shell, desired him to write 'Aristides' upon it. Surprised at the adventure, Aristides asked him 'whether Aristides had ever injured him?' 'No,' said he; 'nor do I even know him; but it makes me wild to hear him always called the Just.' Aristides made no answer, but took the shell, and having written his own name upon it, returned it to the man."

Envy makes us strange enemies. A French officer hated a gentleman because he had a handsome nose; nay, the officer picked a quarrel with him, managed to get challenged, fixed upon broadswords as the weapons, and cut off the nose of his adversary.

Ostracism, as above referred to, Plutarch defines as "a mild gratification of envy, not a punishment for crimes and misdemeanors, but very decently called an humbling and lessening of some excessive influence and power. By this means whoever was offended at the growing greatness of another, discharged his spleen, not in anything cruel and inhuman, but only in voting a ten years' banishment." Considering the working years of a great man are seldom more than twenty, surely this was cruel enough. Nowadays we don't ostracize, we criticise, and many critics are just as ignorant as the Athenian burgher.

But enemies are of this good to us, that they make us friends. Antagonism is a general law, and does not act only in one direction. If A hate us as poison, the chances are that B will love us as sugar. And if enemies be worthless, friends surely are not.

One good friend is worth at least a dozen staunch enemies; and, in talking about friends, we do not mean that spurious article about which so much nonsense is written. The common place-book made some years ago, into which we packed much that we had read, is full of extracts about friends.

Some say that friends are like swallows, and fly away with the summer; others, that they are the thermometers by which we tell the temperature of our fortunes; others that, like insects on a summer's day, they bask in the sunshine, but avoid the shower. But of such friends it is just as well to be quit. The true friend is not one who is to be weighed.

La Fontaine makes a very shrewd remark about the relative value of enemies and friends, in which he places the first in a novel but strange position, quite at variance, indeed, with that other Frenchman, who would buy his opponents.

"A foolish friend," says the fabulist, "is a great evil to a man; even a prudent enemy is better." A prudent enemy | that is, one who, for his own sake, will not take a mean advantage. Well, he may do some good; he may make us look into ourselves; cause us to weigh and consider our own hearts; be wise in time, and careful to avoid follies and silliness. A prudent enemy is better than a foolish friend. "Save me from my friends," is an old saying, true and necessary enough; but a foolish partisan, who gets one into trouble, and who loads us often with folly, cannot be called a friend.

When a man has found one or two true friends he may rest satisfied. He cannot be friends to many, nor have many. His wife, let us say, is one; he has one who loves them both, and one for himself, and that is enough. If these be good friends they will urge him on to noble deeds, and look to his interest more than he will himself. They will be gauges by which he can sound the world and sound himself. He will find his heart cheered up, his countenance sharpened, and his eyes made bright by the presence of his friend.

There is no applause so sweet as that of a true friend, because he alone knows the toils and the dangers, the troubles and the difficulties, which he whom he loves has gone through; no applause so sweet, no praise so cheering, save that of our own hearts; and these, beyond and above those of whom we have spoken, are truly our best friends—and, alas! that it should be so, too often our worst enemies.

An intelligent class can scarcely ever be, as a class, vicious; never, as a class, indolent. The excited mental activity operates as a counterpoise to the stimulus of sense and appetite. The new world of ideas; the new views of the relations of things; the powers disclosed to the well-informed mind, present attractions, which, unless the character is deeply sunk, are sufficient to counterbalance the taste for frivolous or corrupt pleasures; and thus, in the end, a standard of character is created in the community, which, though it does not invariably save each individual, protects the virtue of the mass.

Virtue is so much a unit that no one of its parts can be deficient without the whole being injured. All virtues are interdependent. He who knows no mercy can never be truly just, and he who scorns justice can never be truly generous. He who is wasteful and improvident can give no efficient help to others, and he who is selfish and miserly is certainly not his own best friend. The very insensibility to all merits but one's own displays so gross an ignorance and so low a standard that it must always lower a man in the eyes of every discerning person.

It is false and indolent humility which makes people sit still and do nothing, because they will not believe they are capable of doing much, for everybody can do something. Everybody can set a good example, be it to many or few; everybody can, in some degree, encourage virtue and religion, and discountenance vice and folly; everybody has some one whom they can advise and instruct, or in some way help to guide through life.

Self-culture alone, though apparently non-productive, never ends with self. To undervalue it or to be tempted to give it up on this ground would be a great mistake. Beyond the personal gain to such a one there is a gain to those around him, even though he make no direct effort at all. Every one who raises his own mind to a higher level by that very act raises the community of which he is a part.

Small-talk, if it means nothing more than filling up idle intervals with vapid or foolish remarks, is a thing to be as utterly despised as the most profound philosopher could desire. Indeed the term "small-talk" has sunk so low in the scale of intelligence and sincerity that we need some other expression to denote that casual conversation which geniality and good feeling frequently demand.

Having a purpose in life is essential to right living. If a man does not know what he is living for, he may well be in doubt whether life is worth living. Unless a man is living to a purpose, he has either not yet begun to live or he has got through living, and in either case he is out of place in the world.

Friendship consists properly in mutual offices and a generous strife in alternate acts of kindness. But he who does a kindness to an ungrateful person sets his seal to a flint and sows his seed upon the sand. Upon the former he makes no impression, and from the latter he finds no production.

The only way of keeping a secret is to forget it as soon as communicated. A person may have a considerable reputation for consistency in this matter, thus easily acquired. The only secret worth knowing in this life is how one man can contrive to be better than another; all the rest is mere alchemy.

As the popular voice is but the combined voices of many individuals, so each one, in giving his share of praise and blame, is an active agent in producing one class of conduct and in diminishing another.

A man proves himself fit to go higher, who shows that he is faithful where he is. A man that will not do well in his present place because he longs to be higher, is fit neither to be where he is, nor yet above it.

There is nothing in which a young business-man should take more pride than in the reputation that whatever he pledges himself to do will within all human probability be faithfully performed.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENT.

Mrs. M. C. S.—We do not know "Opportunities," the old book you speak of. Who is it by and where was it published?

Laire.—Blank verse has no rhyme, and is, like the Homeric or Virgilian hexameter, merely measured prose, although Coleridge says, "Prose is opposed to metre." This is blank verse, and fine blank verse, too—

A mind not to be changed by place or time;
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

All Shakspere's plays, with here and there an exception, are in blank verse, although now and then he adds a "tag" rhyme. When the third or fourth, or, as in a sonnet, the sixth line, rhymes with a preceding one, the measure is no longer blank verse; so the gentleman with whom you disputed is wrong.

B. T. B.—1. A lady should never lay aside her bonnet or wraps during a formal call, even though urged to do so. If the call be a friendly and unceremonious one, she may do so if she thinks proper, though never without an invitation. 2. In making a formal visit a gentleman should retain his hat and gloves in his hand on entering the room. The hat should not be laid upon a table or stand, but kept in the hand, unless it is found necessary from some cause to set it down. In an informal call the hat, gloves, overcoat and cane may all be left in the hall, but it would be decidedly impolite to ask or expect the lady to hand them to the visitor upon his retiring.

G. W.—1. The carbuncle is a beautiful stone of a deep red color, with a mixture of scarlet, called by the Greeks anthrax. It is found in the East Indies. It is usually discovered pure of an angular figure. Its ordinary size is one fourth to two-thirds of an inch. When held up to the sun, it loses its deep tinge, and becomes exactly of the color of a burning coal. 2. The heliotrope is a variety of chalcedony (found in Asia Minor) of a deep-green color, variegated with blood-red or yellowish spots. 3. The jacinth, or hyacinth, is a red variety of zircon, sometimes used as a gem. It is found in Ceylon. 4. The iris is only seen in antique jewels. It is a very limpid and very transparent quartz. It is crystallized, a fact which immediately distinguishes it from the opal. It is found by the Red Sea. 5. The chrysolite is of a yellowish or greenish color. 6. The oculus-beli is a pellucid stone—a variety of agate.

Ada H.—Damocles was a man who used to flatter a certain tyrant of Sicily, named Dionysius the Elder. He one day said so much about the extreme happiness Dionysius must enjoy, surrounded by such pomp and state, and the tyrant asked him if he would like to enjoy the same for a time. Of course Damocles was very much pleased, and thought, as he reclined on a splendid couch, attended by beautiful slaves, who served him with a most exquisite banquet in gold and silver dishes, that he was the happiest man on earth. Suddenly, however, he happened to look at the ceiling, and there saw, directly over his neck, a heavy naked sword, suspended by a single horse-hair. His happiness was in a moment turned into misery; and he begged leave to depart. And thus Damocles was taught that no amount of power or wealth can ensure happiness, if the fear of coming evil is constantly in our minds.

M. T.—1. Astronomers divide stars into classes according to their brightness; the brightest being of the first magnitude. Those of the sixth magnitude give so faint a light that it is difficult to see them without a telescope. 2. Of stars visible to the naked eye only the brightest show recognizable color. Some are ruddy, some yellow, and many brilliantly white. With the aid of a telescope more marked instances occur, some stars being blood-red, garnet-colored, rich orange, and golden yellow. A few stars show such color as blue, green, violet, and indigo. 3. The milky way, so called, is made up of countless numbers of small stars. They appear to be close together, so close that they present the appearance of a mass of light instead of separate stars. 4. The astronomical telescope is made up chiefly of a lens, or round glass, called an object-glass, which forms an image of the distant object, and of an eye-glass which magnifies or enlarges this image.

H. M.—The first schooner ever constructed is said to have been built in Gloucester, Massachusetts, about the year 1713, by a Captain Andrew Robinson, and to have received its name from the following trivial circumstances: When the vessel slid off the stocks into the water, a bystander exclaimed, "Oh, how she scoons!" The builder immediately replied, "A scooner let her be!" and from that time vessels thus masted and rigged have been known by this title. The scoon is popularly used in some parts of New England to denote the act of making stones skip along the surface of the water. According to historical records, the word was originally written scooner. The origin of the term as given above rests upon unimpeachable evidence. Babson, in his "History of Gloucester," gives the following extract from a letter written in that place, bearing the date of September 25, 1731, by Dr. Moses Prince, brother of the annalist of New England, the Rev. Thomas Prince: "Went to see Captain Robinson's lady. . . . . This gentleman was the first contriver of schooners, and built the first of that sort about eight years since; and the use now made of them, being so much known, has convinced the world of their conveniency beyond other other vessels, and show how mankind is obliged to this gentleman for this knowledge."

GOOD NIGHT.

BY W. C. R.

Back through the mist of years I roam,
To snatch from Mem'ry's bowers
One passing look at my childhood's home
And childhood's happy hours;
To hear again, as the evening sky
Is tinged with a golden light,
The voice of each little playmate cry,
In a merry tone, "Good-night."

Bright are the dreams of those childhood's hours,
And sweet are the thoughts they bring.
But oh, there is nectar in the flowers
I cull from Love's vernal spring!
And my heart, as 'twere by a magic wand,
Throbs with a strange delight,
As I feel the clasp of a soft warm hand,
And list to the fond "Good-night."

The Miser's Secret.

BY E. Y.

A WILD and dreary day was closing in with a terrible storm. The rain in sheets was driven along by the howling wind at a furious rate, whilst the waves in maddened fury, dashed higher and higher over the sharp rocks and deep cliffs at Penrhyndûn.

The whole force of the gale was felt by the old, half-ruined castle, standing out boldly on the top of the cliffs.

Long branches of ivy had been torn from the walls they had clung to so long; and from the more ruinous parts harsh shrieks and cries, from disturbed bats and owls, added to the dismal effect.

The old Welsh castle, now falling rapidly into decay, was built on the foundation of its namesake, destroyed by order of the king in 1100, and rebuilt in 1300.

For the next few centuries it frequently changed owners; then came a long, unbroken calm, and, except that no grandson ever inherited in his father's shoes, it had now been in the possession of the Mervin family for over 300 years.

The great uncle of the present master was a recluse, and somehow the idea got about that he was also a miser; at his death, this notion had to be given up, for, though long and anxious search had been made, with the assistance of some aged plans, showing all kinds of hidden nooks and crannies, old dungeons, and narrow passages, not a single coin or article of value could be found anywhere.

The need of the family for money being very great, the search was most thorough.

Alone the old man lived, and alone he died, save for one old servant, who on the very day of his master's funeral, having closed and barred the great hall door after the last departing guest, slipped on the old stone pavement, and fell with great force to the ground, hitting his head so badly that he became unconscious.

In this state, apparently dying, the new owner found him on the next night, when, puzzled at no one answering his repeated rings and blows, he hailed a village lad below, who, squeezing himself in by a tiny, unbarred window, unfastened with many fumblings the heavy door.

The old man never spoke again, but his eyes to the last seemed to the lookers-on to turn in a most wistful way to the pictured face of his master, hanging just over the staircase.

An hour before he died, raising himself with great difficulty, he pointed with his shaking hand in the same direction, then sank back unconscious, and so passed away.

This story of course was often repeated, and gained in the telling many alterations.

The villagers grew to have such a horror of the haunted castle, as they called it, that even at the present time they would go miles out of their way on dark nights for fear they should see any of the wandering lights their fathers had so often described to them; or hear the cries and moans that poor old Michael's ghost was supposed to utter on stormy nights.

To explain to them that bats and owls caused these latter, or that the moon plays strange pranks with light and shade, was labor lost.

The present owner, who succeeded the Mervin that found the poor old dying man, was much loved and respected by the poor folk all about, except on one point only; he had married a Roman Catholic, a widow with one young son, and against this lady and her child, bitter and wicked prejudices strengthened every day. Possessed of considerable means, her money was generously spent amongst them, but nothing altered their cruel hate and determined spite.

Three children were born in the castle, a boy, and two girls; healthy, happy little souls, with merry voices and rosy cheeks, devoted to the elder brother, whose watchful care and pride in them was a picture to see.

Then an act of pure malice on the villagers' part, placed the elder lad's life in danger; and for fear of further evil, the gentle mother sent her boy away, first on a long visit to his father's people, and then to train for the sailor's life he had set his heart on.

From that time she pined and drooped, and after a lingering illness passed away, whilst her three babes were all under seven. Her last prayer to her husband was, that he would protect her son if ever he came into wild Wales again.

"My own boy is not more dear to me," he answered. "Madeline, my wife, trust me, we will guard him well, so help us God!"

* * * * * * *

Up in my turret room I heard and felt the full force of the storm, and fancied that the solid walls shook and shivered in the wind's embrace.

A cheerful fire lit up the cosy corners, and I thought as I lay on my comfortable couch, that I was well out of the wind and rain.

The rooms, that I had taken possession of years ago, were those that had been occupied by my old ancestor the miser, and whom in face I was said to take after.

This old man had certainly left his mark behind him, and his chief hobby seemed to have been carving.

Everything was carved that could be, and very proud were all of us, his descendents, of his labors.

On entering the hall by the old iron-clamped door, no one could fail to be struck by the beauty of the low, richly-carved staircase, that curved upwards on the left, and, though surrounded by beautiful panelling that reached to the high pointed roof, this staircase had always been my favorite.

Supported by slender twisted columns, a broad rail with wreaths of foliage twined round in cunning art, guarded the low, easy steps, whilst various creatures, perched here and there, kept ceaseless watch and ward.

A hooded falcon, the crest of our family, stood on the rail at the foot of the stairs; the bird's life-like claws, and ruffled feathers giving evidence of the miser's talent.

Next to him my great-great-uncle's favorite hound, "Gelert" reclined; the same faithful creature on whose shaggy head my ancestor's hand rested in the portrait hanging almost above.

In the dog's eyes in the picture there was a steadfast faithfulness portrayed, that had been well caught in the deep-set carved eyes on the stairs.

Above the dog, a grinning monkey held a nut aloft; and mice and a large serpent completed the train. I have been told that on this staircase the old man spent years of labor.

Most of the other carving he had bought, and dove-tailed together, but no hand but his had the credit of the staircase.

That the dog had gained a firm hold on his master's heart was evident; another likeness of him hung over my fire-place, again with the deep-set, sunken eyes, and wistful look. Across one corner of this painting a small plan of the castle cellars and dungeons was carefully drawn.

My brother left his home suddenly, the reason not being mentioned to us children; but some years ago my father told me what had decided my mother and himself to send the lad away.

The people all about were a rough lot, working, many of them, in the slate quarries owned by my father, and others picking up a precarious living as fishermen.

In hard times, want and hunger were frequent guests.

Against my mother and brother, "The Papists," at such seasons, the feeling was very bitter; and at last the worst spirits in the place made a kind of league that, by fair means or foul, the place should be rid of these heretics.

My mother never could master the Welsh language, though she tried hard, and as the poor folk could not understand a word of English, their intercourse was very restricted, and I shall always believe this want of mutual knowledge lay at the root of the mischief.

At last one winter's day brought a crisis.

My brother spent hours on his pony, riding alone wherever he liked, and one day, returning from a long round, he was crossing a narrow wooden bridge, leading his tired pony, when, with a sudden crack, the centre gave way, and, in a minute, he found himself clinging hard to the slender hand rail, with his pony struggling on the rocks in the water just below.

Tired and spent, the poor creature was quickly drawn into a foaming rapid, and swept, bruised and bleeding, far down the river.

Harold sickened at the sight, but still clutched hard his rail, and managed so to swing himself along, that at last he had cleared the broken space, and stood, white and shaken, on the bank in safety.

My father went next day at daybreak to examine the bridge, and found, what he had feared he should, that the supports and beams had been so carefully sawed and loosened, that the slightest weight must bring it down.

It was easy to suspect many, but to bring the deed home was simply impossible.

The pony was found next day, mangled and dead, and my mother's face grew ashen white, as she thought that this was meant to be her boy's fate.

My father issued a very stern command that, riding or driving, we were never to cross these little bridges again, but always to go round by the road.

Considering what wild little imps we were, perhaps he was right.

He also gave orders that the broken bridge should be repaired.

My brother left us, and though we missed him dreadfully at first, we soon got used to his absence.

Not so my mother; she faded slowly but steadily away, and at last there came a day when my father led us gently into her darkened room, and bade us kiss her peaceful face, and remember her dying charge to meet her one day in the rest above.

My father was a most reserved man, and it was a rare occasion, indeed, that brought his religious opinions to light; but though of a different faith to his wife, their mutual belief in a Heavenly Father never faltered.

The years rolled on, and, except for our rapid growth, there was little to mark time's progress.

My father spent weeks of anxious thought after my brother's hurried departure, as to whether or no he should permit me to mingle with the villagers, or send me right away to school. At last he decided on having a tutor for me and the sisters, and left me free after lesson-hours to go where I would.

Oddly enough, though my brother had been hardly tolerated in the place, I could do any mortal thing I pleased with the poor, rough folk, and spoke and read Welsh as easily as English.

They took me out fishing, taught me how to manage a boat, to swim, and scale the cliffs like a goat, and watched over me with the greatest of care.

Also I knew all the workings of the slate quarries.

One evening, late, I was riding fast home, a storm having rapidly come up, when I found I had taken a wrong turn, and was almost on the fragile bridge that had given way beneath my brother long ago.

Once over that, a few minutes would take me home, only that old promise to my father stood in my way. A promise enforced afresh by him on giving me my first shaggy pony.

I knew I must turn round and make for the long, dull road passing near the cliffs, and yet I waited whilst the wind sent dismal warnings down the valley, and the leaves in the trees sighed and groaned as they muttered to each other there would be no rest for them that night.

At last I turned my horse round, and, through the gathering gloom rode on.

I remember passing Tom, a village lad, a great crony of mine, just my own age, and then, either startled by a bat flying under his nose or the increasing storm, off went my young horse in a mad gallop, with ears laid back and snorting breath.

Soon we reached the track passing over the cliffs, and rushed straight for the edge.

In fancy still, I can feel the sting of the air on my face, as we raced along; then we were at the edge, and an awful temptation seized me to throw myself off!

Jack made a frantic effort to swerve round, and I tried to aid him with all my might. The edge was crumbly and soft, no foothold for the frightened, quivering creature, and in a second over we went to the beach below. A loud shout rang in my ears as we slipped over the edge, and then I remembered no more for many days.

My friend Tom came tumbling down the cliff, which just there was twenty feet high, and, finding me unconscious and the horse with a broken leg, did the best he could for me.

I had fallen from the saddle in our wild leap, quite clear of the horse, so Tom covered me carefully with his coat, and ran off for help to the fishers in the cove.

All this I learnt long afterwards.

Six words were enough, and all the place was astir.

Lights soon flashed around me, I was laid on a mattress, covered with blankets; vain attempts were made to get a little whisky down my throat, and then with even, slow steps, they carried me home.

The bearers changed repeatedly; men with lanterns walked on either side, and called out warnings of stones and rocks.

Tom started for the castle after leaving me in the fishers' care, and my father came down the dark road to meet us.

He told me afterwards that the tears were wet on many a rough face, and horny hands shook his as he bent over my poor, drawn face.

What touched him most was to hear men who had never given him anything but a surly word, call him "Master," and bid him not lose heart.

Then would come a cough, and a choke, and the back of a rough hand would be dashed over the eyes.

On entering the castle, my father desired my careful bearers to carry me up to his own, large, comfortable room; then, seeing they could give no further aid, with a muttered "God bless him," the men went quietly down and away; two of their number remaining outside all night, in case they might be of any assistance.

Tom had gone off at once, on our fastest horse, for the nearest doctor, but, in such an out-of-the-way place, all knew it must be hours before he could return.

My father and our old nurse undressed and felt me all over, and could find no broken bones anywhere.

They did not like the absolute motionless of my lower limbs, as I lay stiff and rigid on the bed, moaning pitifully.

If only I had moved, even uneasily, they would have felt cheered.

Getting alarmed at the increasing coldness of my legs, they spent the rest of the night rubbing me with hot flannels, and so in the early dawn the doctor found them.

After one quick glance all over me, he breathed softly, "Paralysed, poor fellow." I was then sixteen, now I am eight-and-twenty.

When I slowly came back to my senses, and my father gently, and very sadly, explained to me that in falling I had come with great force on my back, injuring the spinal chord so greatly that paralysis had immediately set in, and never again should I stand or walk, I buried my face in the pillow, and prayed that I might not live.

I could not bear my life, I muttered, week after week; God was very cruel to have treated me so.

All my dreams of noble deeds and acts of bravery lay buried in the sandy shore below the cliffs.

I made my father's and my sisters' lives a burden to them; and as for old nurse, and the lad, Tom, who had begged to be allowed to wait on me, I treated them worse than slaves.

With such bitter repinings and incessant irritability I made but little progress towards partial recovery; and how long matters would have gone on so I do not know, if, six months after my accident, my father had not sat down by me, and talked as I never knew he could.

He put before me the harm I was doing myself and others, by such rebellion against God's will; showed me that I was making our once happy home miserable, and cheered me with his strong conviction that there was yet good work for me to do in the world, or my life would not have been spared.

Then, putting into my hand a very worn copy of the "Changed Cross," he left the room, praying me to show that my bravery was not skin deep.

It was a hard and bitter battle, but, at last, thank God, there came a day when I could truly say "God knows best."

For some few years I got on wonderfully; was carried downstairs regularly, and often wheeled out of doors.

Two years ago I had rheumatic fever so badly that it was a wonder that I recovered; the doctor warned me never to overtire, or over-exert myself in any way, as there was mischief at my heart.

The turret rooms were given over to me, hand and foot, life no longer seemed the dreary burden I had dreaded so.

Finding my daily moves shook me a good deal, I remained, by advice, in my own three rooms, where, however, I had no time to be dull. My father was good enough to call me his right hand. All the accounts and business of the estate passed

through my hands, thus enabling him to dispense with a bailiff. Writing became my chief amusement.

Times did not improve; strikes became the order of the day; bad seasons ruined the harvests; a spirit of discontent seemed everywhere, and on this stormy night in question, I knew my father was more worried about money than he cared to own.

The old savage spirit was awake again amongst the village folk, and rumors daily gained that the storm would soon burst, but what form it would take no one knew. . . . . Elsie, my sister, wants me to leave off writing now, as she says I look so tired, but I shall not rest long, for there is something I want to get written clearly down in case of need . . . . . I am weary of courting sleep in vain, and all my nerves seem on edge, so I must try and quit them by my old panacea, writing.

Half-an-hour after I had laid down my pen to please Elsie, in the midst of the uproar of the storm the boom of a signal-gun startled us all, assembled as we usually were in the evenings in my snug room.

My father went off at once with Tom, lanterns, brandy, a long coil of rope, and a blanket; and my sisters took up their position at the turret windows, and strained their eyes into the gloom without.

At such times as these, it was very bitter to me to feel powerless to aid in active ways, but this night I felt so worn and weary, that the longing to be up and doing seemed dead.

Our coast was a cruel one from rocks that ran far out to sea, and when any vessel by stress of weather was driven on to them, her doom was sealed.

Two hours passed slowly away, and the second had just ended when, dripping from head to foot, with a white, set face, my father entered; and we checked the eager questions on our lips, as we saw how white and weary he looked.

After drinking a little of the cordial my sisters had ready, he told us briefly what had chanced.

A vessel, apparently a foreigner, was on the rocks when he went down, and the crew could be made out clinging to the rigging.

The force of the waves was awful, and he soon saw she was breaking up fast. It was madness to try to reach her, but for all that he did his best to get a crew together, bribing the fisher-folk, at last, with more money than he could afford. Not a man responded, and my father did not blame them for this, he said, for the attempt, humanly speaking, must have failed.

It grieved him greatly to see the lowering faces, and hear the harsh tones that met him on every side.

The vessel broke up in a minute, so to say, and the next crested wave rose high over the rocks around. There seemed to be faint cries in the air, but this might have been fancy. Soon pieces of wreckage came drifting in, and then some bodies, bruised and bleeding from the blows given them by the cruel rocks as they drifted shorewards.

Only one young man had life in him, and after a little brandy had been forced down his throat, he began to revive, and father and Tom carried him as speedily as might be to the castle.

The men still held aloof, and my father did not like the looks they cast at the poor stranger, so decided to lose no time in returning home.

The stranger was now under old Nurse's care, and with Tom's assistance he would want for nothing.

Father then rose, and asked us all to go to bed, but when the girls had left the room, he came back a minute, and touched my hair softly.

"My lad, I have a strange dread on me to-night, and wish I had not to leave you at day-break for that Manchester trial."

"Father, of course you must go," I answered, "why, you are subpœnaed. Trust me to do my best."

"Trust you, my boy! Ay, better than myself, and if need arise, remember your dog's secret!"

"I sometimes think, father, we have not got to the bottom of that yet."

"Do you think so? Well, we'll see when I return; and now, my brave lad, take care of yourself, and God bless you!"

Long after he had left me, I lay and fought with the feeling of depression that had been on me all day; then Tom came in to help me undress, and told me our strange guest was sound asleep.

He had been so exhausted, and faint, that they thought they should never get him round, but at last, when nice and warm, he fell into the sound slumber he was now in.

Tom also said he did not like the quarrymen's looks at all, he knew they were on short commons, and he heard there was a lot of sickness amongst them.

He left me, and I lay and counted the strokes of the clock, hearing the hoofs of my father's horse as he crossed the courtyard soon after four, and knowing he had gone on his journey with an anxious heart.

Old Nurse brought me my early tea, and she had something special to say. She looked at me keenly, and then said very quietly:

"Master Frank, the stranger guest is your brother Harold!"

I exclaimed in surprise, then she proceeded to say that she had had no idea of this at first, though puzzled at his resemblance to someone. Considering the years that had elapsed since we saw him, and that he had grown a beard and moustache, I think she may be forgiven.

Stealing in to look at him during the night, she saw on his arm thrown back above his head, a tattooed cross, and immediately identified him as her first nursling. She said my mother had been very vexed with her for getting a sailor to tattoo the baby arm, but she had had it done to keep evil from the lad.

Just before the bottom end was finished, the baby burst into such a passionate fit or tears, it had to be left undone, thus leaving a jagged end to the cross.

The old woman said she could not imagine why she had not seen the mark whilst undressing him the night before, but being in a great hurry to get warm things on him, the cross never caught her eye.

My next visitor was my long absent brother; ill indeed he looked.

He was coming home on sick-leave, when the vessel ran on the rocks, and, feeble and weary as he felt, it seemed hopeless to think of reaching the shore alive.

A sailor had kindly flung a life-belt round him a minute before the vessel sank, and he remembered nothing more until he found himself in bed.

Seeing old Nurse did not recognize him, he felt too drowsy and stupid to announce himself, and drifted off again into sound slumber.

I asked him why he had not written to say he was coming home; but he said it was such a sudden thing he had no time to do so.

He knew how nervous my father would get at his coming to the castle at all, and yet he had such a great longing to see us all again, he felt he would willingly run some risk; besides, surely that old prejudice must have died out years ago? How I wished I could honestly say it had! Tom now came in, and it was easy to see he also had tidings to tell.

He said he had word by a sure hand, that, stirred up by mischief-making agitators, who had now been busy amongst them for some time, all the quarry men and fishers had arranged a plan to seize the foreigner marked with a cross! What sharp eyes!

They meant to take us by surprise, and intended no harm to us if we let him go quietly.

Tom said the men were half mad, he thought, and quite beyond control. Their object in this proceeding did not seem clear to any of us; those who had urged them on may have had some fixed motive in their minds, or else some personal spite against us; and so, under plausible arguments, and false smooth words, persuaded the poor ignorant people they were doing a righteous act to take the law into their own hands in this riotous manner.

"I will go at once," said Harold, rising feebly from his chair. "Frank, my boy, I am glad to have seen you again. Give the sisters my love; I had better not wait to see them. God forbid I should bring any bother or trouble upon you, for you don't look fit to stand worry."

I thought a minute earnestly. My father had taken his own horse, and the only other one we possessed had gone lame a week ago. How could we send that weak, worn-out man out into the chill, bleak, December day, out of the way?

"Then I said quietly, "it is all right, Harold, we can hide you safely;" let me just dress, and I'll show you how."

Soon I was ready, and asked Nurse and Tom to carry me in my long chair down to the old hall, and Elsie hurried off to see there was a good fire, and plenty of wraps on my long-unused oak settle.

All tried to persuade me not to descend, but just to tell them what to do, but I felt it was clearly right for me, in my father's absence, to do my best for Harold; and I hardly have brooked staying up in my turret rooms whilst he was in danger. So, carefully and slowly they carried me down. Stopping them when we reached the carved dog on the staircase rail, I raised myself with difficulty, and pressed my little finger hard into Gelert's right eye.

Then I grew cold and shivered, for suppose my plan was a failure after all!

What more likely than that dust, and rust combined, had done their noiseless work!

Again I pressed, leaning harder, and a click rewarded me.

A carved panel forming a piece of the side of the staircase opened slowly inwards, and disclosed a tiny flight of steps.

Thankful that the spring was still all right, I leant back in my chair, and asked to be carried down to the settle, and that food blankets, and a small lamp should be collected.

I told them the steps led into a narrow passage running between the dungeons shown on the plans, and ended as far as I knew in a small, well-ventilated room, hollowed out, I believed, in one of the buttresses.

The ivy outside was so thick that the loop-holes in the walls were quite invisible from outside. I had tried in vain to find one, and could not.

Madeline and Elsie got quite excited about our wonderful chamber, and I felt glad anything should divert their thoughts from our present anxiety.

Harold proposed they should accompany him below on a visit of inspection, and they all tripped cheerfully down the narrow staircase. They came back, still excited, and asked me if I knew there was an old oak chest down there, with one or two yellow papers in it.

I told them I had looked round pretty thoroughly when first I found out about the spring, only a fortnight before my accident, meaning always to pay another visit one day. On telling our father of my discovery, he had advised our keeping it to ourselves, in case of troublous times arising, when we might be glad to hide our valuables away.

We both felt sure our great-uncle had left instructions with his servant to pass on his secret, and understood why, in dying, his dim eyes had so wistfully sought the dog's face.

Harold asked me if there was any way of opening the door from below, but this I did not know; only I had discovered by pressing the dog's left eye, the panelled door would shut.

"Well, if I am to be there for hours, I would just like you to shut me down first for half-an-hour, that I mayn't feel quite so queer," said Harold, "and there is no time like the present."

Armed with the lamp, and Elsie's company, he descended again; and Tom pressed the left eye hard, and so shut the panel, when we judged they had reached the hidden room.

Then we waited half an hour, and opened the panelled door for them to return. They seemed in no hurry, and at last Madeline went down to see what they were up to.

By this time I knew I was in for one of the dreadful spasms of agony any extra exertion always gave me, but I trusted it would not overpower me until danger to Harold was past. It seemed ages before quick steps up the staircase announced the explorers' return, and when I saw their white, excited faces, I felt sure they had discovered something fresh. They were very dusty and quite breathless.

On going down Harold and Elsie had just reached the hidden room when a loud click sounded near them—the spring of the panel shutting, Harold said, but Elsie declared it came from the chest.

They lifted the lid, to find the bottom had slid up against one of the sides, and another set of steps lay below.

Down this, of course, Harold with his lamp must go, and, rather than be left alone, Elsie followed close.

The steps wound round and round, until Harold had counted forty, when they ended in a passage like the one above, leading into another well ventilated room, with a tiny barred door.

This was so fast set and stiff, it took Harold some time to move the rusty bolts, but at last he pulled it open, to find a thick wall of ivy, through which he made out the door opened on the wilderness part of the garden, quite hidden from any window.

They shut the door again, and looked about the room.

A small table, on which stood a brass-bound box, stood in the middle, with an old chair alongside, and all round the room were various-sized carved chests.

Opening the box, they saw a bag of gold, and an exact copy of the staircase above, drawn on paper, with the springs shown, and also plans of the dungeons, with the hidden rooms blacked in. On the wall was a carved panel of the dog, with the same deep-set carved eyes.

"Depend upon it," said Harold, "this is the counter spring, and opens and shuts the doors below."

They decided not to try them then, or to open any of the chests, but to bring me up all the papers; and shutting the box again, hurried up above, only just getting through the chest door before another loud click closed the bottom down, and opened the panelled door above.

Here Madeline met them, and they got talking, so no wonder it seemed ages to me before they returned.

"I must say," observed Harold, "I feel happier in mind to think I can get into the open from the lower room; suppose the springs snapped up here, how pleasant it would be if one could not!"

"It is easy to see, Frank, why you only knew half, because, you see, you were up here shutting the panel. My boy! How bad you look."

"Please Nurse, give me my draught, and don't mind my not talking much."

So silence fell around, Nurse and my sisters being used to these occasional fits of agony, which, as a rule, did not last long.

The hours passed quietly on, and, at last, I was able to talk, and write again, and we had just settled cosily together to look at the old yellow papers, when Tom came swiftly in, and said, quietly:

"The men will be here in ten minutes, and they look like mischief."

* * * * * *

WRITTEN BY ELSIE.

Frank then asked Harold to go below, I worked the springs, and assisted to pull my brother's couch across the movable panel, then we sat down quietly and waited.

The tramp of many feet and the hoarse murmur of angry voices came rapidly closer, and then a furious peal at the bell. Tom had had his orders, and immediately opened wide the entrance door.

I turned sick and faint for a minute, when I saw what a crowd of evil faces looked menacingly at us.

Calm, and quiet, Frank lay; with a most peaceful look, one I had often noticed on his face, after his awful pain was over. A hoarse, unintelligible murmur from the men, and then his low, clear tones, "My friends, what do you require?"

"The Papist! the foreigner! Him with the black mark!"

Louder and louder grew their tones, and many shook their fists savagely.

"What do you want with him?"

"Never you mind," was the rough answer, and then one man stepped forward, and waved his comrades for silence.

"See, young sir," he said, "this is the matter in dispute. We have sworn to drive all Papists from this place; we mean you no harm, all we require is for you to tell us where to find the man saved from the wreck last last night, then we will depart orderly, and quietly."

"The man you ask for is my long lost absent brother, known beyond doubt by that cross some of you noticed on his arm. To give him up, as you call it, is impossible, I am sure you will all agree."

Frank could hardly finish for the storm of oaths and execrations that arose in deafening clamor when the men heard who the foreigner was.

Half mad with fury, they uttered any and every threat they could think of, and, suddenly losing all command over themselves, they rushed up the staircase, along the passages, down to the dungeons; here, there, and everywhere, making the most hideous noise.

We women shook and shivered, and drew close to Frank, fearing, dreading every moment they would return and, by some evil fortune, find out our secret!

"It is all right, dears," Frank faintly said, as he saw how frightened we were. "At the sound of the spring working, without a call from us, Harold, who is in the lower room, is to go through the door into the ivy, where Tom is waiting to guide him to another safe place, a hollow tree, which he will have reached long before these poor creatures have found out the double spring, if they ever will find any."

We waited what seemed ages; presently all sounds of uproar died away, and then Tom came back, and said all had left the Castle, and gone back to the quarries, and he should have sure word, before they returned.

Nurse went and got some food ready,

and we released Harold from his hiding-place.

The old hall looked very comfortable with the curtains drawn, and the warm firelight playing all about, and we did not have lamps for some time.

Frank seemed so drowsy, that, when we had had our meal, we sat in silence for a long, long while; and then, hearing Frank sigh, I fetched a light in case he wanted anything.

Ah! nevermore, my brother.

At first we thought him still asleep, but there was something about him that startled us, and then we saw God's finger had most softly touched him, and he slept.

We sank on our knees beside that quiet sleeper, with his peaceful look; surely the angels had been very near us.

For long we had known how frail his life was, but all the same it came suddenly at the last.

There was a quick footstep in the hall, and Tom stood beside us, the eager words on his lips dying soundlessly away, as he saw what had happened.

It might have been five or even ten minutes later, when again that hoarse hum of angry voices approached. Almost as in a dream I heard the angry battering at the door, even stones flung sharply against it, whilst strong arms tried to shake the old bolts and bars.

I suppose Harold, who was now standing at Frank's head, signed to Tom what to do, for he went quietly forward and undid the massive door.

A savage shout, a great burst of furious men, and the hall filled with an angry riotous crowd.

With a dead stop, so to say, on an instant every sound was hushed; as the fierce, famished eyes of quarrymen and fishers fell on the motionless form they loved so well, then another silent pause, and the hall was empty, except for us.

Poor misguided creatures! all bitterness against them died away then and for ever, as we saw the look of despair and grief that fell on every face as they saw what had happened. The forlorn way in which they vanished away, pleaded better for them than any speechifying could have done.

Next day my father returned; a sad home coming for him, though he did not fail in all his sorrow to give Harold a most warm and loving welcome.

A few days more, and again a large crowd had assembled at the Castle door.

Welsh folk always pay the last respect possible to the dead by attending them to their graves, but I think it must have been centuries since such a concourse was seen as that which followed Frank to our quiet little mountain churchyard.

A deputation came up to my father on his return home, and most humbly prayed they might be allowed to act as bearers.

"We carried him once before, sir," urged one man eagerly, "it would make us feel happier like, to do summat for him."

"There is something else you can do," said my father, firmly, "remember, I have another son, whose life must not be made miserable by your ignorant prejudices."

So they carried him carefully along, and many a sob resounded as the beautiful service was read.

It was touching to see how even the poorest in that great crowd had put on some mark of mourning.

Then the home life had to be resumed with a great blank in the middle.

We have had no strikes since, and we heard the agitators of that time had had such rough handling from those they had for a time misled, it would be long before any more disturbances troubled our parts.

We looked over the aged-worn papers one winter's night, and found, besides most carefully explained plans of the hidden rooms and springs, a short explanation from our old ancestor himself.

He said he had found these old rooms with trap-door communications bolted down, soon after he came into possession.

They were then in a very dilapidated condition, and he was afraid, from various relics he found, that they had been used for cruel and wicked purposes.

On entering the lower room, he thought he saw a dark crouching figure in the corner (where afterwards he had opened, or rather made, a small door), but it seemed suddenly to melt, and when he reached the spot, only a heap of dust and a few bones were to be seen: a rusty chain on the wall still holding one poor bone in its grasp.

On the wall were several words scraped deeply. "God help me," was quite clear, and then another one with only the "Daw" readable.

An old chest with some money in it was all the furniture then in the lower room.

With the then rector's cordial consent and assistance, he and Michael had carefully buried the bones and heap of dust from the lower room, one dark night, in the churchyard; and handed over to the clergyman all the money from the dungeon, to be spent as he deemed best for the good of the poor.

Who could say that perhaps now the doom on the family might be expiated?

He decided to restore and improve these chambers, for their use as a safe hiding place might yet be invaluable. It had been a pleasure to him to carry out the alterations as ingeniously as he could, the day might come when his labors would be of use; indeed, for many years before he wrote this explanation, he had removed there all the family heirlooms, jewels, silver, etc., and placed them in chests, also all his money, of which he had never had any lack.

That there should be no mystery about the matter, besides drawing two different sets of plans (one of which he placed in each of the hidden rooms), he had left with Michael full and complete instructions to pass on his secret to his successor on his taking possession of the Castle.

With a parting charge to all who succeeded him to keep the rooms in order, the old man signed his name.

The miser's secret was at an end!

LIVING BAROMETERS.

AQUATIC animals are alleged to be affected by the approach of atmospheric changes. It is said that porpoises and dolphins swim to windward on the approach of rough weather, and sailors look with misgivings upon the sports and gambols of these unwieldly creatures as they circle round their ships when the sea is calm.

The variable prospects of the angler according to the height of the barometer is in itself sufficient proof of the effect of the weather upon the inhabitants of our lakes and rivers.

It is an interesting fact that the earliest suggestion of storm warnings on foreign coasts was that of Dr. Merryweather, at the Great Exhibition of 1851, where he showed a living barometer, consisting of bottled leeches, which rang little bells by an ingenious contrivance when a storm was at hand.

His proposal to establish a system of leech barometers at the principal seaport towns was never carried into effect, and sounds somewhat ludicrous at the present day. The president of the Meteorological Society evidently expects us to find it difficult to believe that the scheme was propounded seriously.

Yet there appears to be a good foundation in fact for the connection between the weather and the behavior of the leech. When placed in a bottle partly filled with water, a leech is said to remain coiled up at the bottom before the coming of fine, cold weather; but it rises to the top of the bottle, sticking on the glass above the level of the water, when it is going to rain. It is said to become restless on the approach of electrical disturbances.

A similar use was commonly made of frogs in Germany and Switzerland. A small green variety was kept in a glass vessel half full of water, into which a miniature ladder descended.

The frog sat high and dry upon the steps in expectation of cold and wet, but remained in the water when there was a promise of sunshine. Reptiles, also, which remain torpid during the winter have this weather sensitiveness in a marked degree. Eastern superstition has even endowed snakes with power over wind and rain.

In the insect world, too, similar instincts seem to exist. The 'rain-beetle' of Bedfordshire, a long-bodied member of the large family of beetles, has acquired its name from the supposed association of its appearance with the coming of wet weather.

That a bee was never caught in a shower is a familiar belief arising from the habit which this insect has acquired of remaining at home when unfavorable weather is threatening. Ants, wasps, and spiders exhibit the most watchful anxiety for the approach of inclement seasons, and in the disposition of their nests, eggs, or webs they utilise to the utmost their acquired faculty of guarding against wind and rain.

Indolence in spiders is believed to be a certain sign of bad weather, for they seldom change their web unless it is going to be fine, and they make the frame lines of their webs unusually short, to meet the resistance of a rising wind.

Such precautionary instincts and prophetic powers as they possess are, as has already been stated, the natural outcome of a necessity for self preservation. In the case of plant-life, although provisions for the safety and dispersion of the species are equally necessary, we do not find this protective power against bad weather to so marked an extent.

There is also a difference between the habits of plants and the instinct of animals. But certain plants are capable of giving weather indications of considerable accuracy and value.

The pink eyed pimpernel, the "Poor Man's Weather-glass," as it is often called, is so sensitive to atmospheric changes that it shuts up its petals in the damp air which precedes rain, and is widely relied upon, before all other weather signs.

This peculiarity is also possessed by other common wild-flowers, such as the wood-anemone, or wind-flower, the chickweed, convolvulus, and gentian. The burnet saxifrage and the chickweed even go so far as to half open their flowers again if the rain is soon to cease. The African marigold, which closes its petals regularly at nightfall, fails to reopen them in the morning if the weather is damp.

The well known saying which attempts to determine the weather of the coming summer by the priority of the oak or ash in the development of leaf-buds has probably no more foundation in fact than belongs to the natural characteristics of these trees. In this country the oak is usually in leaf before the ash, and in so moist a climate the early summer is more often wet than dry.

According to modern meteorology, the greater part of the storms which traverse this country are of the cyclonic type, in which there is always a well-defined distribution of atmospheric temperature and pressure. The front of an advancing cyclone is marked by a damp muggy atmosphere, with a general depressing effect upon the nervous system of man himself.

It is not surprising that the lower animals should feel it also. The heaviness of the air renders the scent of flowers, and other odors, more apparent, and explains the habit of sniffing the air displayed by many animals before a storm. The excessive dampness of the atmosphere, by its influence on cutaneous perspiration, accounts for much of the restlessness and feeling of discomfort which so many of the fur and feather tribe betray during the passage of a cyclone across the land.

The animal skin and also its appendages, are peculiarly affected by the humidity of the air. The Zuni Indians of New Mexico were wont to predict rain from the scalp locks captured from their enemies. The fur of animals, the moist skins of toads and frogs, and the plumage of birds are very sensitive to small variations in the hygrometric state of the atmosphere.

Dampness has also a marked effect upon many vegetable tissues. If a beard of wild oat is fixed upon a stand, it twists itself up more or less according to the amount of water vapor present in the atmosphere.

Pine cones can be used in a similar manner as natural hygrometers, closing up their scales in damp weather, and expanding them when the air is dry. The leaf-stalks of plants are softened by damp, causing the leaves to droop or hang unnaturally.

The sensitive plant, mimosa, exhibits increased irritability in the warm, moist air of a cyclone front; and even the downy hairs of dandelions, thistles, and colt's-foot contract and expand under the ever varying influence of atmospheric vapor.

Here, then, is the explanation of the movements of plants described above. The ploughman's weather-glass need lose none of its efficiency because its mysterious sensibility is thus accounted for; it tells us actual conditions, which, rightly understood, may be capable of interpretation as signifying changes to come.

After the cyclone front has passed away, the air becomes dry and bracing, and a feeling of exhilaration pervades the whole of creation. Sea birds fly out far to seaward, rooks and kites soar aloft in the air, insects float in the light breeze in search of honey-dew, and plants expand their leaves boldly to the sun. The confidence of all nature is restored, for the dangers of the storm are over.

Some politicians object to woman suffrage because they believe that if women could vote the handsome men would get all the offices.

At Home and Abroad.

Another Emperor, William of Germany, delights in the possession of the working model of a railway, with engine, carriages, rails, points, signals and stations. This he works with the greatest glee. He also takes a vivid interest in the collection of toy soldiers—said to be the finest in the world—belonging to his children, which is so large that the whole floor of a vast hall in the palace at Berlin can be covered with it. Battles are fought on a European scale, his Majesty directing operations.

Some little time ago a famous firm of London solicitors found it necessary, in a case involving large interests, to have some detective work of a difficult and delicate nature done in this city, and instead of employing the regular agencies put it in the hands of an American woman of good social standing in private life. She undertook the task, and has been so completely successful in the performance of it that the firm employing her had not only thanked her, but sent her a check for a handsome sum. The employment of women of education and position for delicate detective work has become common in England, but thus far few women have been so employed in this country. If they go into the business, however, it is pretty safe to say that they will succeed in it.

The day of Expositions does not seem to be by any means past, despite the widespread public verdict to that effect uttered soon after the closing of the gates of the White City. Here in Paris already in the throes of preparation for the birth of the great World's Fair of 1900; the Cotton States Exposition has just ended at Atlanta, and Tennessee intends to celebrate the centenary of her admission to the Union next fall; yet New Orleans is out thus early with the promise of an International Exposition in 1903 as a commemorative centennial event in honor of the purchase of Louisiana by the United States. Reasons are always as plentiful as huckleberries. New Orleans, it must be confessed, has a decidedly plausible and inspiring one. It would signalize the inauguration of Federal territorial expansion.

The Rev. Phebe Hanaford has suggested, in an address to the New York Society for Political Study, that the moral tone of the New York police would be raised if women should be placed on the force. Miss Hanaford's police women would not wear uniforms, nor would they carry blackjacks or nippers; but they would be clothed with authority to act in cases of disorder, particularly in cases of intoxication of persons of their own sex, who "when sober once more could be talked to by other women, who would point out to them the glories of a Christian life." There is certainly still room for improvement in the moral tone of the New York police. Whether such betterment could be promoted by what would in practicality be re-enforcement with Salvation Army methods in a matter which might be worthy the consideration of Commissioner Roosevelt.

A lady of Nova Scotia, writing to a Boston paper, says that the Americans who visit Nova Scotia are almost without [illegible] people. "We do see a great difference between their speech and ours. Their [illegible] and shorter, and they are so up to date as to slang. I am afraid that in our quest of health we fool [illegible] by the long enjoyment of [illegible] Americans who are holiday in Nova Scotia, perhaps too evident. But when the pleasure with which they [illegible] into any pleasures that are [illegible] and the good will with which they are ever ready to help any charitable scheme which may be afoot in a place where they are staying, are put in the scale against the loudness which sometimes offends us, the trifling peculiarity kicks the beam."

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Our Young Folks.

WEATHER-MAN AND HIS WIFE.

BY SIRELA

FOR twenty years the little weather-man and his wife, the little weather-woman, had lived contentedly in their little slate-colored house with its two doors. When it was fine she stepped out with a jaunty air, and when it was wet, he came to the fore. When it was "unsettled" they both stood at their respective doors, and waited until it either poured with rain or cleared up.

So the time passed, and the little weather-man and his wife went quietly about their business without a thought of change.

It was the Harts Manikin who upset them. He was carved out of wood, and had a tall, pointed cap, and a mischievous smile on his lean face. As soon as he arrived, things began to go wrong.

The weather had been stormy for some days; consequently Hans, the little man, was abroad.

"Hullo!" cried the Harts Manikin.

"Hullo!" responded Hans, not sorry to have someone to talk to. It becomes monotonous to stand quite still in the same place for days together, with nothing particular to think about.

"Wife at home in the warm, I suppose?" said the Manikin. "I wonder she doesn't take a turn with you now and then."

The weather-man looked surprised; this was quite a novel idea to him.

"You see, she isn't arranged like that," he began.

The Manikin gave a snigger.

"All these years, I suppose, you have never seen a glimpse of the sun?"

"Well, no; not exactly," confessed Hans, beginning to feel badly used.

"And the moment it turns a bit wet, your good lady skips inside and takes care of herself?"

"Well, yes; and then I have to come out."

The Harts Manikin began to smoke his wooden pipe.

"Doesn't seem quite fair," he observed between the puffs, "'turn and turn about' is my motto, and not a bad one either. Why, here comes the sun? Oh, you are off, are you?" bursting into a laugh.

The weather-man's face was rather blank as he retreated into the house, while his wife emerged from the other door. As it was fine for six weeks straight off, he had plenty of time to consider his case, and to make up his mind that it was an unjust one.

"That wooden gentleman is perfectly right," he said to himself; "Why should my wife have all the sunshine, and I all the wet? That is not an equal division of labor; I should rather think not. It must be altered;" and he glared round the corner at the little weather-woman, who was too far out for conversation.

It was six whole weeks before the two were sufficiently near for the weather-man to express his ideas. These very much surprised his little wife; in fact, she was quite upset by them.

"But, Hans my love," she expostulated, "we have gone on like this for twenty years, as regular as clock work."

"Twenty years too long!" declared Hans obstinately; "'turn and turn about' is my motto, and not a bad one either. It is quite time you learnt what a cold, rainy day is like; you have never had anything but sunshine all your life."

"That is true," said his wife, "and perhaps I have been selfish; but it never struck me before in that light."

"It will do us both good to have a change," said the weather man. "To-morrow, if it seems inclined to be wet, I will stop at home, and you shall go out."

"Very well, dear," sighed his wife, "but it will be very upsetting—we have been so regular in our habits for twenty years."

* * * * * *

"Children, children, you don't call this picnic weather."

"Oh! Aunt Lieschen, but it's Alma's birthday, and you know you promised."

"It's going to rain—look at the clouds."

"Oh! but it's going to clear up, auntie. The little weather-woman is out, and not the little weather-man."

Five children began to caper round the table, singing in a kind of chorus: "The little weather-woman is out, out, out; and the little weather-man is in!"

Aunt Lieschen went to examine the gray house herself.

"Well," said she, "these little people have never deceived us for twenty years, so I think we may trust them. But I am certainly surprised to find the lady out today instead of the gentleman. However, we will risk it. Get your hats, children."

The little weather-woman could have cried, only she was not provided with tears.

"What a dreadful, dreadful thing!" she gasped; "I ought to be at home, and Hans ought to be out. It's going to rain, and they will say we are not to be trusted. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

The malicious Harts Manikin roared with delight.

"This is a rare joke," cried he. "I was afraid, when I first came, that it was going to be dull; but things are waking up. You are sure it will pelt, good Mrs. Weather-man?"

"Yes, I can feel it in my bones. Oh, if I could but get Hans out before they start!"

Inside the gray house the weather-man's conscience was steadily pricking him. It was going to be a very wet day, that he could feel; and he was letting his little wife, who was used only to sunshine, stay out in the rain.

"We have never disagreed for twenty years," he thought uneasily; "but how the wooden gentleman will jeer if I go out!"

"The children are coming back, ready to start," his wife was sighing. "Oh! If Hans would only remember his duty."

"You seem unhappy, ma'am," said the Harts Manikin, chuckling. "Do you fancy it will hail while those dear children are in the woods?"

The weather-woman suddenly gave a scream of joy. She found herself slowly backing into the house, and very well she knew what that meant. Her husband was coming out. They had only time to exchange a smile as they passed each other, but that was enough to put matters straight between them. Just the right kind of smile means so much.

As for the disagreeable Manikin, he turned perfectly green with rage, as he spluttered

"I didn't think you were quite such a poor, weak spirited creature."

The weather man answered never a word, but marched out as far as he could, and stopped there.

Aunt Lieschen came bustling back.

"It doesn't look at all like clearing up," she was saying in a puzzled tone; "I can't understand it."

"Children, I am very sorry, but we must wait for a fine day, mustn't we? The weather-man is out, after all."

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

BY L. R. N.

WOSHI the big lobster was a bully. All the other lobsters agreed upon this point, and they all hated him, especially the younger ones. He was big and lazy, and made all the little ones wait upon him. They dare not refuse to do anything he told them, because he was so strong and powerful; he might kill them if they offended him, but they all hated having to obey him.

They had a meeting one day to see if anyone could suggest a good way of getting rid of him. The lobsters came flocking from far and near, and there was not one who had not some complaint to make against Woshi.

"I was sitting in a corner eating my dinner the other day," said one, "when he came up and snatched it away from me, and ate it all up before my eyes."

"I was having a quiet nap yesterday afternoon," said another, "when he came and woke me up, and said if I didn't find him something to eat in five minutes, he would eat me."

"That is just what he does with me," said another.

"He killed poor little Skamp for refusing to go one day," said a fourth.

"And he nearly always comes and takes my food away from me. That's why I'm so thin," said a poor little feeble lobster in a weak voice.

And so they went on one after another, giving accounts of how they had suffered from Woshi's bullying ways, but no one could suggest a good way of getting rid of him. Fighting him seemed to be the only possible chance, and there was not a lobster present who did not stand too much in awe of him to attempt that—they knew his powers too well.

At last the meeting dispersed, and the lobsters were no better off than they had been before. Nothing had been gained, except that they knew each other's troubles rather better, and felt even more bitter than ever, if possible, against their tyrant.

But tyrants never have things all their own way for an unlimited time, and Woshi's reign of tyranny came to an end at last quite suddenly and unexpectedly, to the great joy of his unwilling subjects.

A young lobster was crawling along the sea-floor one day, when he came upon a strange-looking object. It was an object that is probably quite familiar to you who read this story—a lobster-pot; but the lobsters in those parts had never seen such a thing before.

This one looked at it, and saw immediately that it held food. He walked round it, and found that the only way to get at the food inside was to climb in through the opening at the top. Little thinking that it was a trap to catch him or any unwise lobster who should venture in, he was beginning to crawl on to it when he thought of his brother, the poor little weak lobster who never got enough to eat. There was plenty here for two, so, after a glance round to make sure that there were no others in sight, he got down again and, like a good brother, scuttled off to fetch him.

He was soon found, being only a little way off, and the two came hurrying back together, making all the haste they could for fear of anyone else being before them.

They had nearly reached the lobster-pot, when a voice behind them called out—

"Where are you going in such a hurry?"

They started and looked round. It was Woshi.

"Where are you going?" he repeated.

"For a walk."

"Nonsense! I know better than that. You wouldn't scuttle along at that rate if you were only going for a walk. It's food you're going after. Where is it? You had better make haste and tell me, because I'm hungry, and if I don't get something else directly I shall eat you—both of you!"

The two brothers shrank away from him in terror, but neither of them spoke.

At that moment he caught sight of the lobster-pot and its tempting contents.

"Aha!" he exclaimed, "that is what you were after, is it? You miserable little sneaks, what right have you to a feast like that? Be off, and leave it to me!"

With these words he crawled up to the trap, and was soon inside it, feasting away to his heart's content.

The poor little brothers went slowly off, feeling disappointed and angry, to tell their friends about this example of Woshi's greediness; but though they got plenty of sympathy, there was not a lobster who would advise them to resist their tyrant when he was hungry.

Woshi, having eaten all he wanted, presently turned round to walk out of the lobster-pot again. Seeing no opening he turned round the other way—still he could see no way out. This puzzled him very much.

He had not noticed the way when he scrambled in—he was thinking so much about the food—but now it seemed perfectly impossible to get out again.

He never thought of looking upwards, so did not see the opening over his head, but walked round and round his prison, getting more furious every minute.

Presently another lobster came by, and Woshi called out to him to tell him how to get out of this cage.

But the new-comer, seeing that he was a prisoner, hurried off to tell the news to his friends, and soon the lobsters began to collect from all directions.

Their delight at seeing the common enemy caught at last was unbounded. They formed themselves into a ring, and walked round and round the lobster pot, mocking his attempts to get out, and laughing at his promises to leave them alone in the future if only they would help him out.

Suddenly the lobster-pot began to move. It was being drawn up; and as the crowd of lobsters watched, they saw their enemy in his narrow prison swung up over their heads through the clear waters, higher and higher, till they could see him no longer.

What became of him they never knew. All they knew was that they were all very much happier now that he was gone—they were no longer living in daily terror for their lives, and they could all settle down to their dinners in peace, without any fear of having the food snatched from them. As for the poor little thin weak one, he grew so fat and strong that he declared he felt quite equal to fighting Woshi himself if he ever came back.

But he never did.

"Charity is never lost. It may be of no service to those it is bestowed on, yet it ever does a work of beauty and grace upon the heart of the giver.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Forty-nine per cent. of London days are wet.

Boiling tar applied to masonry makes it impervious to water.

Texas has a proposition to tax all bachelors over 30 years $50 per annum.

It is said that the State of Kansas has nearly 100,000 less population than it had in 1890.

There are in this country over eighty national trade unions, with a membership of about 500,000.

The British Empire doubles its population in Europe every 55 years, in the colonies every 25 years.

The Patent Office has issued 3075 patents for inventions, contrivances and discoveries in telegraphy.

An Anthony, Mo., paper has an office crib to accommodate readers who want to pay their subscriptions in corn.

Great Britain owns 2,570,000 square miles of Territory in Africa, an area almost equal to that of the United States.

Estimating the amount of blood in the human body at twenty-four pounds, twelve pounds pass through the heart every minute.

There are thirty universities and colleges in this State, against twenty-three in New York. Illinois has thirty-one and Missouri thirty. Ohio has forty.

An ice marriage took place recently in Holland. The couple were married on the frozen Zuyder Zee, the ceremony being followed by a dance on skates.

It is said that the Duke of Marlborough has been making extensive purchases of property in London. The sum invested is placed at nearly $750,000.

Portraits of the German Emperor were shown in London shops after he had sent his cable dispatch to the Boers marked "Reduced to sixpence from £1."

Austria is the country most lenient to murderers. In the ten years ending in 1879 there were 818 criminals found guilty of murder, of whom only 23 were put to death.

The New York Board of Aldermen are considering the advisability of compelling all bicycle riders in the metropolis to have their wheels provided with brakes.

Another colored child preacher has arisen in Farmland, Ind. He is but 12 years old, but is said to be conducting wonderful successful revival services in that vicinity.

A dog owned by a man in Addison, Mich., walked back home a distance of 40 miles recently. Its owner gave it away, but the dog didn't like its new home, and quietly trotted back to its old kennel.

Indian criminal statistics, according to Le Figaro, show that there is one criminal to every 274 Europeans, 500 Eurasians, 700 Hindoo Christians and 1891 Brahmins, while the proportion of Buddhist criminals is only one in 3787.

Congressman Johnson, of California, has the reputation of being one of the best jury lawyers on the Pacific Coast. It is said that one of his strongest points is to kneel down in the courtroom and shed real tears to move the jury.

In Turkey the Jew stands between the Moslem and the Christian, who hate each other. The Jew occupies neutral ground. The Turk likes the Jew because he is no Christian, and the Christian likes the Jew because he is no Turk.

Divorce has been legal in France now for eight years. In the first year the number was 1709; in the second, 4008; in 1892 it was 8000, the total for the eight years being 40,000. The working classes supply the largest proportion, 47 per cent.; the peasants the smallest, 7 per cent.

Maine's Labor Commissioner has been gathering statistics on the cost of living in that State. He figures that the average daily cost of living is 31 cents a day for each individual in the average family. The cost of living to single men, boarding, is 40 cents. These figures cover rent, food, fuel and light.

A firm of architects has drawn plans for a 200 story building, to be erected in New York City. The structure is to have 1,000,000 offices, and 50 elevators are to be employed in taking passengers from the ground to the top floor. The express elevators are to make the journey in 2½ minutes, the way elevators in 15.

By a vote of 31 to 11 the Iowa Senate on Saturday passed a bill making it a crime to manufacture or keep for sale cigarettes in the State of Iowa. It is known as the Phelps bill, and it will pass the House by a big majority. It makes it unlawful to handle cigarettes in any manner. They cannot be given away. The penalty is a fine or imprisonment or both.

Among the personal effects of the late Cardinal Bonaparte, which are to be sold at auction, are the throne of Napoleon the Great, the small table on which the Emperor wrote at St. Helena; two carpets which once belonged to Mme. Laetitia, mother of Napoleon; a beautiful miniature of the Empress Josephine, and a bust of the Princess Pauline Borghese, by Canova.

HEART DEATHS.

BY S. C. W.

Hearts oft die bitter deaths before,
The breath is breathed away,
And number weary twilights o'er,
Ere the last evening gray.

I've sometimes looked on closed eyes
And folded hands of snow,
And said, "It was no sacrifice;
The heart went long ago."

Oh, blest were we if every pang,
Like harshest discord given,
Proved a celestial bird which sang
And lured us to heaven!

THE MATING DAY.

It used to be said that on St. Valentine's Day the birds began to mate, and thence its association with lovers. The earliest authorities say that St. Valentine was a bishop, gentle, charitable and benignant, whose tongue was marvelously persuasive in convincing the benighted pagans of the errors of their way. He labored hard and earnestly in his good work, but, alas, his zeal did not suit the pleasure of the authorities, and after being cruelly beaten with clubs he was beheaded.

This happened in the reign of Marcus Aurelius Claudius, on the 14th day of February, somewhere about the year 270, but after his abrupt taking off the canonization of the good bishop followed, and his name has been a household word ever since.

It is a singular circumstance that the new saint took the disease of epilepsy under his peculiar patronage during the first of his saintly career, while now it would appear that his jurisdiction confines itself exclusively to the domain of the heart.

How did the good saint become recome responsible for the flood of tender sentiment which is annually poured forth under shelter of his venerable name? A few only of the reasons will be given. One of the simplest explanations was that referred to at the head of this article. This theory was popular for some time until a heartless naturalist knocked it into smithereens by proving that, as a matrimonial season, birds didn't care any more for the 14th than for the 13th or 15th.

Another reason assigned was that St. Valentine, being a man of love and charity, it was natural to suppose he would patronize these virtues. Perhaps the best solution is the following: With the dawning of the Christian era pagan rites, pagan ceremonies and pagan feasts began to disappear. Some of the feasts, however, were merged into Christian holidays.

The festival of the Lupercalia was the one on which the Romans did honor to Pan and Juno, not only with the banquet, the dance and the drama, but by a peculiar ceremony in which the young men drew from a box billets, each inscribed with maidens' names, each bachelor devoting himself for 12 months to the lady falling to his lot.

In the natural order of events the Lupercalia became St. Valentine's day, and the drawing of billets was so agreeable a custom that the youthful blood rebelled against the annihilation. It was therefore permitted to continue and from that time to this, with more or less variation to suit the times and the people, St. Valentine and Cupid have been on very intimate terms of relationship.

In the last century, on the eve of St. Valentine's day, the young folks in England and Scotland celebrated the festival. An equal number of maids and bachelors came together, and each wrote his or her name upon a separate billet, which was rolled up and placed in a box. Then the females drew by lot from the males' names and the latter from the names of the females. After this the valentines, as the chosen ones were called, gave parties to their friends, each valentine wearing the billet on his or her sleeve for several days. This little sport often ended in an engagement of marriage.

In younger days St. Valentine's day used to rank with Christmas and Fourth of July in much anticipated pleasure and in the simple delights that were attendant upon the coming of the lovers' saint. The little girl who did not have at least a half dozen valentines to show was considered very unpopular indeed, and so strong was this feeling that parents, fearing lest the youths of the neighborhood might not be blessed with sufficient money to favor every little girl and knowing what a disappointment the absence of the postman's knock would mean to their smallest daughters, would prowl out the night before and buy up paper hearts and gay little Cupids presiding over verses that breathed of love and darts rhyming with dove and hearts.

The elder ones regarded the sentimental side of the affair only and did not mind if but one missive were received, provided it was from the one, a fact which was generally speedily discovered, despite the disguised handwriting and other mysteries attached to the delivery of it. To-day the hideously ugly penny dreadfuls and the paper stage scenes have given place to more substantial offerings, and the day is celebrated in quite a different manner. Now large and beautiful boxes, filled with bonbons and tied with ribbon where some sentiment appropriate to the day is painted, are the gifts generally exchanged.

A candy Cupid presiding over a bouquet of lovely blossoms, or sprays of flowers tumbling in artistic disorder from a silver or gold heart or a quiver and arrows of tiny buds, are all the up to date gifts of the modern valentine.

In the country the lads and lasses used to hang baskets of early spring blossoms on each other's doorbells, or if winter had lingered until the day of the mating of birds paper flowers were substituted.

To-day they give a valentine, luncheon or party, and the tables take the shape of hearts, the candle shades become opening roses, and a little pink Cupid bearing its own valentine is the souvenir for the guests.

The simplest forms of entertaining and celebrating on every occasion have given way to the more extravagant and the more artistic modes, and in nothing is this more noticeable than in the evolution of the valentine and the gayeties that mark the day of which it is the leading feature.

Grains of Gold.

Distinction is an eminence which is attained but too frequently at the expense of a fireside.

Nothing serves more effectively to lighten the calamities of life than steady employment.

Oftentimes it is not until we no longer have the means of serving our friends that we can know who they are.

Time is the bell-ringer of the Universe. He strikes the hours even now, presently he will peal the chimes.

It is more from carelessness about the truth, than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world.

To neglect at any time preparation for death is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit it in old age is to sleep at an attack.

Nature is a book of sweet and glowing purity, and on every illuminated page the excellence and goodness of God are divinely portrayed.

It is a base temper in mankind, that they will not take the smallest slight at the hands of those who have done them the greatest kindness.

There is this difference between happiness and wisdom; he that thinks himself the happiest man, really is so; but he who thinks himself the wisest man, is generally the greatest fool.

There is nothing like courage in misfortune. Next to faith in overruling Providence, a man's faith in himself is his salvation. It makes a man strong as the pillared iron, or elastic as the springing steel.

Luxury is the conqueror of conquerors, the consumption of states, the dry rot of the constitution, the avenger of the defeated and oppressed. Poverty, conquest, luxury, decay—such is the round-robin history of the world.

Femininities.

A spinsters' club is to be established in London, marriage terminating membership.

"Johnna, don't forget to dust the bric-a-brac." "No, ma'am; where do you keep the dust."

There are some men who act according to their lights, but there are more who act according to their livers.

On Saturday, at Salem, Ill., a mother and her three daughters were granted divorces in rapid succession.

"Poster parties" are the latest fad. The ladies dress and attitudinize after the manner depicted in current poster drawings.

A Missouri woman won a house and garden in a raffle, and then she had to buy a rifle to keep her adorers from wearing out the steps.

It is given out as a positive fact that there are 1154 women in New York city who do not know their age. It is safe to say they are over 40.

The Queen Regent of Spain is a confirmed smoker of cigarettes, and when at work is seldom without one between her lips or in a box near at hand.

"Aren't you the same beggar that I gave half a pie to last week?" "I guess I am, mum; but I'm willin' to let bygones. It ain't in my heart to bear no malice."

Before marriage a man frequently assures his love that he would lay the whole world at her feet if he could. Afterward she has to browbeat him for an hour to get him to lay a carpet.

"If a fellow has a chance to marry a poor, handsome girl, or a rich, plain girl, which do you think he ought to do?" "It looks to me as if the proper course is a plain one in that case."

"Louisa, don't let the men come too near you when you are courting." "Oh, no, mamma; when Charles is here we have a chair between us all the time." Mamma thinks the answer was rather ambiguous.

Mrs. Nellie Showalter of Kentucky, a direct descendant of Chief Justice Marshall, is said to be the most brilliant woman chess player in the world. She is to take part in the Brooklyn tournament in April.

The greatest bane of Queen Victoria's existence is the enormous amount of original "poetry" sent to her from all parts of the world. On the recent birth of the royal grandson nearly half a ton of manuscript verse was received at Windsor.

One of the public schools at Marmouth, Me., has 13 pupils, the oldest being 13 years old, and this is the teacher's 13th term in the school. All the pupils of the school are well and are doing well, and the school is making a more than usually good record, notwithstanding superstitions about 13.

Even that excellent motto, "Look forward and not back," doesn't always work well, as a young man in Waldo county, Me., discovered the other day, when, after driving several miles, he found that the pig supposed to be in the back of the wagon had made an early and successful break for liberty.

The dowager Empress Frederick of Germany takes great interest in all the occupations of country life and has lately turned her attention to bee-keeping, which she considers a most useful industry for the peasant population. In order to encourage bee-keeping she has become the honorary President of the Wiesbaden District Bee Society.

Over 36,000,000 pairs of gloves are used in England every year, and of these fully three-quarters are worn by ladies. The value spent by them in these articles amounts annually to no less than $7,500,000. One manufacturing firm alone finds employment, directly and indirectly, for 50,000 people, and at Wordester alone nearly five miles are covered by glove factories.

At a dinner party the other night a handsome young physician had been particularly bright and entertaining. As the ladies left the table cigars were passed and accepted by all of the gentlemen but the doctor. The host looked at him in astonishment. "What, not smoke?" said he; "Why, my dear fellow, you lose half your dinner." "Yes, I know I do," replied the doctor; "but if I should smoke I would lose the whole of it."

"Now, Eliza, dear, do listen to me. When Henry comes this evening, and you pass him the pie, watch his countenance closely." "Yes, ma." "If he trembles with joy, ask him how he likes your cookery; but, if he shudders, just mention casually that your mother always attends to the pastry." "Oh, ma, how kind of you!" "Don't mention it. He will hate me; but, when I live with you after marriage, all will be explained."

In a small district school in Hampshire a lady teacher was hearing a class in spelling and defining words. The word "orphan" had been correctly spelled, but none of the class seemed to know its meaning. After asking one or two of them, she said, encouragingly: "Now, try again. I am an orphan. Now can't some of you guess what it means?" The blank look upon their faces remained, until one of the duller scholars raised his hand, and said: "It's some one who want's to get married, and can't."

Masculinities.

Many a man has lost his friends by introducing them to one another.

Girls and billiard-balls kiss each other with just about the same amount of real feeling.

A perfectly proportioned man weighs twenty-eight pounds for every foot of his height.

"Violet, dearest, do you play that tune often?" asked Hugh Montressor of his affianced.

No man is so austere as not to secretly relish the reputation of having been a trifle wild.

It is a pity that marriage is the only remedy that has so far been invented for curing a love affair.

There are 37,000 women telegraph operators in the United States, and the number is constantly growing.

"That new baby of Youngfather's is a remarkably wide-awake child." "So I've heard. We live next door to it."

Eight of the ten universities of Great Britain now admit women to degrees, and it is expected that Cambridge will soon be the ninth.

Kate: I went to a stereopticon entertainment the other night with young De Spooney. Laura: Did you enjoy the views? Kate: Very much, indeed. It was just like going through a tunnel.

Rollingstone Nonoss: Say, Ragsey, wot makes you always so sleepy? Ragson Tatters: Well, you know know I uster work. Rollingstone Nonoss: Wot! Ragson Tatters: Yes; I uster make night shirts.

Mr. Charles Fraser, the Scotland Yard official who is in constant attendance on Queen Victoria, is a delightful gentleman, as well as a skilful detective, and has grown to be a great personal favorite with her Majesty.

Judge: Are you aware of any mitigating circumstances in your case? Criminal: Yes, your Honor; this is the fiftieth time I have been arrested for vagrancy, and I thought that perhaps we might get up a little jubilee.

A foreign paper says that a woman in Germany the other day had to be sworn twelve hundred times in a suit which her deceased husband's estate was involved. This took three whole sittings of the tribunal, but she won the suit.

George: Women are still pushing their way into every trade. Jack: That's so. I have just been discharged to make way for a woman. George: You have? Well, well! What are you going to do now? Jack: I am trying to marry the woman.

"Do you not think, my dear," said a doting mother to her husband, "that our Adolphus has a great talent for saying things which nobody else says?" "Yes, and also for saying things which nobody ever ought to say," was the unfeeling response.

One of the latest enthusiasts among the followers of the bicycle is the Crown Princess Stephanie, of Austria. She has begun to take lessons, and proposes to ride on a wheel through a part of England next spring. The Crown Princess is the widow of Prince Rudolph.

A lady teacher in one of the public schools, in trying to explain the meaning of the word "slowly," illustrated it by walking across the floor. When she asked the class to tell how she walked she nearly fainted when a boy at the foot of the class shouted: "Bow-legged, ma'am!"

Robert Burns' great-grandson and namesake, his last descendant in the direct male line, has just died at Blackhall, near Edinburgh, aged 82 years. He had served as a soldier and as a gardener in the Edinburgh public gardens, but for 16 years past had been keeper of the powder magazine at Blackhall. He left no children.

A New York paper tells of a Vermont bachelor who one day set the table in his lonely abode with plates for himself and an imaginary wife and five children. He then sat down to dine, and as often as he helped himself to food he put the same quantity on each of the other plates, and surveyed the prospect, at the same time computing the cost. He is still a bachelor.

A young man and young woman of Southold, L. I., were married one evening last week, whereupon their neighbors decided to serenade them with a brass band. As the newly married couple refused to notice the music or the music makers, the latter forced the front door of the house, and entered with their musical instruments. Now the bridegroom has sworn out warrants against the musicians on a charge of burglary.

The most strenuous upholder of woman's equal capabilities with man cannot say that her inventive faculty is so prolific as his, but it has, notwithstanding, accomplished some very remarkable results. Women are not only sending in thousands of applications for patents or improvements in articles especially useful to their sex, but they are exercising their ingenuity in improving many of the implements with which long usage has led people to believe that only men should deal. The first woman inventor in New York was a Mary Kies, who invented a manner for weaving straw with silk or thread in 1809.

Latest Fashion Phases.

While Lent in many sections puts an end to the celebration of marriages some reports of late wedding gown ideas may not prove uninteresting. A recent French letter on the subject said.

Bridal gowns are so nearly alike in material and vary so little in style that they have become almost a uniform; yet every effort to bring about any marked change ends in renewed fidelity to the conventional white satin gown. Pure white is more popular than the cream tints this season, and the quality should be very rich and heavy. The fancy of slashing waists and sleeves extends to the wedding gown, and white chiffon is used to fill in the openings with pearls and silver trimmings on the edges. The neck may be cut out round and filled in with a guimpe of chiffon. A pretty change is made sometimes by draping the bodice with a Marie Antoinette fichu of white chiffon, and another by making it in the coat style, with a short basque and wide revers turning back from a chiffon vest. Plaited frills of chiffon set in to fall over the draped collar band are a pretty fancy, and elbow sleeves of chiffon, with a frill below, are not uncommon. Another way of varying these gowns is in the fullness and length of the train, which, except for home weddings, is usually very long, and in the trimmings of real lace, of which there may be much or little.

Brocaded satins or silks with satin flowers are occasionally used for bridal gowns, but more especially when the Louis XVI. style of dress, with a coat and tablier skirt, is preferred. A novel gown worn by an English bride is made of cream satin in a deep tint, with a full bodice trimmed below the neck band with festoons of pearl and silver trimming. A lace cape falls over the shoulders in a point to the waist, where a silver belt with lace tassels completes it. The Marie Stuart sleeves are ruffles and puffs of satin, with puffings of chiffon for a finish. Another unusual gown is made of white peau de cygne, a closely-woven silk, which resembles cloth, and trimmed with edgings of brown fur and applique flowers of lace on the epaulets and waist. The bridal dress shown is of ivory white satin with a round train trimmed with orange blossoms. The bodice is draped with Brussels lace which falls in long ends on each side of the skirt, and has a Medici collar, yoke and cuffs of crystal and pearl embroidery. The tulle veil is attached to a wreath of orange blossoms.

The wedding veil is an important and becoming part of the costume if it is arranged gracefully and to suit the face, but otherwise it detracts from the whole effect, and a novice in the art of adjusting this article of a bride's dress should never undertake it.

The new way of poising the hat well over the forehead gives a more serious and demure expression to the face underneath than the upturned brim, and the effect is rather topheavy with the hair fluffed out so wide at the sides.

Hats in Paris are said to have diminished very much in size, but the trimmings are as elaborate and bizarre as ever, combining summer and winter flowers, lace, feathers and imitation jewels on one hat. A very stylish theatre hat has a capote-like crown of white velvet covered with jet and steel and a jaunty little rim of plaited black chiffon, while the only trimming is a butterfly ornament of black lace and steel.

Flowered moire, very soft and rich in quality, and sometimes striped with satin, are among the new silks in soft shades for dressy gowns.

All the shades of plum, heliotrope and violet are very popular this season for cloth dresses and velvet hats, which are prettily trimmed with flowers, lace and fur.

Ribbons which were a distinctive feature of dress in the Louis XVI. and XV. periods are being copied for use in summer gowns and hats.

Pretty sleeves for evening dresses are made of a puff of lace, chiffon or tulle, with bands of velvet in some bright color arranged over the puff from the lower edge of the arm hole, and caught tightly to the lace to hold them in place.

In a toilette in Louis XV. style. The wide black velvet skirt has a band of sable fur placed 18 inches from the foot, which forms deep scallops that encircle the skirt.

The Louis XV. bodice is made of white satin, adorned with large squares formed by narrow stripes of black velvet. This coat-bodice has the front edges bordered with sable fur which open to reveal a jabot gilet of white lace, terminating under a wide waist band concealed at the sides and back by a deeply fluted frill of the plaid satin lined with white satin. Epaulettes of guipure lace, mounted on white satin, are framed with sable fur, and secured at the bust and back by a large rhinestone button. The leg-o'-mutton sleeves flare at the wrist and are cut in two points.

The hat of black velvet has the crown encircled with a frill of white velvet and sable fur. A large black aigrette, tipped with jet, is arranged at the back.

One of the leading Parisian houses has just created two charming silk gowns, which would be exceedingly smart for teas. The first, an electric-blue prismatic silk, with the skirt decorated with three flatwise flounces of notched velvet. The bodice has a berthe of the same velvet at the bust; and above, a small collet of velvet, lined with ermine. The hat worn with this effective gown is made of the velvet garnished with white plumes shaded with blue, and small heads of ermine. The other gown is of quite a different style, although just as ravissante, and is made of sea-green ottoman trimmed with panels of a darker shade of velvet, blouse of velvet and sleeves of pompadour green taffeta. The green velvet capote has a white satin crown, and is ornamented with fans of white lace, a white aigrette and choux of green velvet.

A smart gown is made of dark blue velvet trimmed with white chiffon, ecru lace and chinchilla fur. The plain skirt is lined throughout with gray silk, being faced six inches at the foot with haircloth.

The fitted bodice has fluted basques at the sides and back, and a Louis XV. vest of white chiffon enriched with perpendicular rows of narrow ecru lace. The large revers collar is made of chinchilla fur. The velvet collar band is headed by a ruffle of chiffon and finished at the back by a jabot of the same. The velvet sleeves are cut leg-o'-mutton shape, and are unadorned.

An attractive jacket is made of printed velvet, and is very chic for the theater when worn with either a black silk or velvet skirt. The fronts are open and slightly pointed, like an Eton jacket, and, being in spot pink flowers, they form a charming contrast with the immense revers of green satin that disclose a full vest of lace falling in a flounce to the waist. Below the revers there is just room on each side for two big straw buttons. From the under-arm seam springs a fluted basque. The sleeves are gigots with green satin cuffs and lace ruffles. A green satin collar is tied in a large double bow at the back.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Stammering. — A correspondent who stammered from childhood almost up to manhood gives a very simple remedy for the misfortune: "The remedy is to read aloud with the teeth closed, and was stated to me thus: 'Go into a room where you will be quiet and alone, get some book that will interest but not excite you, and sit down and read two hours aloud to yourself, keeping your teeth together. Do the same thing every two or three days, or once a week if very tiresome, always taking care to read slowly and distinctly, moving the lips but not the teeth. Then, when conversing with others, try to speak as slowly and distinctly as possible, and make up your mind that you will not stammer.' Well, I tried this remedy, not having much faith in it, I must confess, but willing to do almost anything to cure myself of such an annoying difficulty. I read for two hours aloud with my teeth together. The first result was to make my tongue and jaws ache, that is, while I was reading, and the next to make me feel as if something had loosened my talking apparatus, for I could speak with less difficulty immediately. The change was so great that every one who knew me remarked it. I repeated the remedy every five or six days for a month, and then at longer intervals until cured."

Apple Fool.—Bake good sharp apples, remove the pulp with a spoon, and beat it up with a little sifted sugar. To a teacupful use the yoke of an egg and a penny sponge cake; mix together, and rub through a sieve. This is nourishing; and useful in any case where cream or custard is objected to.

Sausages.—It is a common practice to prick sausages before frying, but this lets out all the gravy. A properly made sausage will not burst in frying if it is put into the pan with a little melted but not hot fat, and cooked slowly until hot throughout. Fifteen to twenty minutes should be allowed for frying sausages, and when done they should be nicely browned. A little butter or lard is best for frying, and some pieces of light bread may be fried in it when the sausages are done, and placed neatly round the edges of the dish.

Rice Rock Cakes.—Six ounces of flour, ground rice, and crushed loaf sugar, three ounces of butter, two eggs, ten drops of essence of lemon; mix thoroughly, drop on a buttered tin with a fork, and make them rough; half a teaspoonful of baking powder improves them.

Treacle Pie.—Line a pie dish with thin paste, cover with treacle as for roly-poly pudding, and continue alternate layers of paste and treacle till the dish is full, finishing with paste; bake in a moderate oven.

Australian Meat Soup.—Peel one pound of onions and cut up small; put in four quarts of water with half a pint of split peas and a little pepper and salt; boil gently for three hours, or until the peas are thoroughly softened; take a pound of Australian roast meat and jelly, and put with the soup, and simmer for half an hour. Serve with a large dish of well boiled potatoes, or, if preferred, pass the potatoes through a colander, and place at the bottom of the tureen and pour the soup over.

Omnibus Pudding.—Half a pound of flour, half a pound of beef suet, half a pound of currants, half a pound of raisins stoned, half a pound of sugar, half a pound of scraped raw potatoes, and a quarter of a pound of scraped carrots, mixed together, and with spice to taste. Boil four hours.

Oatmeal Cracknels and Scotch Bannocks.—Take the finest quality of oatmeal and stir in barely enough water to wet it through; add a pinch of salt; let it stand for ten minutes to swell; then roll it out a quarter of an inch in thickness, first flouring the board and rolling-pin with wheaten flour; cut it with a biscuit cutter, and bake in a moderate oven, as these cakes will burn quickly, and only require to be of the lightest brown. If put in a close jar, they will keep for several months. In the Highlands they preserve their bannocks in the barrels of oatmeal, and keep them a year or so.

Vermicelli Pudding.—Take a teaspoonful of Vermicelli, boil it in a pint of milk, and stir it until it is well blended; then pour it into a basin to cool. Now add three eggs, a large tablespoonful of marmalade, and sugar to taste. Beat the whole together gently, and pour it into a mould in which raisins have been placed in all its indents. Tie the mould over, boil one hour, and serve with sherry sauce.

Looking glasses should be washed with spirits of wine; after drying, powder slightly with whiting and polish with a leather. Take care that the whiting does not get into the edge of the frame. If of wood, polish with this paste, made as follows: Three ounces of common bees' wax, one ounce of white wax, one ounce of curd soap, one pint of turpentine, one pint of boiled water. Mix the ingredients together, add in the water when cold, shake the mixture frequently in the bottle, and do not use it for forty-eight hours after it is made. It should be applied with a piece of flannel, the wood polished with a duster and then with an old silk rubber.

Transparent paper for copying drawings or needlework designs may easily be made by placing a sheet of paper over the drawing and rubbing it lightly with pure benzine. The tracing can then be made, and the benzine evaporating leaves the paper opaque as before.

Here are the ingredients necessary for making a good cider cup: One pint of cider, one sherry glassful of sherry, one sherry glassful of brandy, one liquor glass of curacoa, a piece of ice, one-half of an orange, sliced, one yellow rind of a lemon, one slice of cucumber, one dash of nutmeg and sugar to taste.

To make candy that requires cooking, and to be successful, the sugar must be boiled to just the degree. Several technical names are used by confectioners for the different degrees of heat to which the syrup is brought in the operation of candy making. The smooth degree indicates a thick syrup; dip a stick into it, and if it is oily to the touch the degree is reached. This may be used for crystallizing purposes. The thread state is reached when the syrup, taken from the stick with the finger, separates quickly and hangs in small threads. The feather condition is when it may be drawn out, like fine hairs, without breakfast. The ball degree is reached when on taking the stick from the syrup and dipping it into cold water the sugar can be worked like putty. The crack degree is when the sugar leaves the stick clean when dipped into cold water and snaps into pieces when hit. The caramel is the last stage. In it the syrup becomes dark colored and care is required that it shall not remain too long over the fire. A smooth stick is the best thing to use for testing boiling sugar. Dip the stick first into ice water, then into syrup, and again into water. After sugar is melted it should not be stirred.

A pinch of cream of tartar added to the sugar when thus placed over the fire will thus prevent its graining. If the sugar boils until it is too hard, add a spoonful of water and try it again, and if the sugar begins to grain when working it, a little water must be added and it must be boiled once more.

An excellent polish for mahogany is made of one part of boiled linseed oil to two parts of alcoholic shellac varnish. The mixture must be well shaken, applied in small quantities with a woolen cloth, and rubbed vigorously. A fine polish will be produced.

Stains of rust may be removed from fine linen and similar fabrics without injury to the material. The articles must be first well soaped, as if they were to be washed in the ordinary way. An iron is heated, and on this is laid a wet cloth. When the heat makes the cloth steam the rust stain is laid on it, and a little oxalic acid is rubbed on with the finger. The heat and the moisture hasten the effect of the acid on the rust, and when this has disappeared the soaping and washing may be continued.

An authority on the chemistry of foods cautions housewives against cooling loaves of bread too rapidly after taking them from the oven. "Much of the souring of bread," he says, "is doubtless due to lack of care during cooling." Bread is, especially while warm, a good soil for the development of the various kinds of moulds and bacteria. A loaf of bread, hot from the oven, taken into a poorly ventilated room filled with people, will become sour in the course of two or three hours.

Linen.—A French author who was once employed to contribute a serial story to a newspaper, paid for by the line, was in the habit of introducing such passages as these, each phrase making a line.

"Have you seen him?"
"I have."
"No!"
"Yes!"
"Where?"
"Here."
"When?"
"To-day."
"Then he lives?"
"He does."
"Ah!"

The publisher rebelled, and said, "I must have a new contract. We will pay you by the letter, not by the line."

"But my contract says that I am to be paid by the line."

"Yes; but your contract does not say that I shall not end the story when I please. If you do not consent, I shall put the words 'The End' at the close of the next instalment of your story, and print no more of it."

The author reflected for a minute.

"Very well," said he—"I will take my pay hereafter by the letter, provided you let the story run on until I have quite finished it."

"Agreed," said the publisher.

When the publisher came to read the next instalment of the story, he found that the author had introduced two new characters, who stammered dreadfully, and whose talk ran after this manner—"O-o-o-o-o-o-o can you not b-b b-b-b-b-break the d-d-d d-d dreadful news g-g-g-g-g-g-gently to our m-m m-m-m-m m master?' 'N-n-n-n-no o-o-o o-o-ver, G-g-g-g-gaston!' murmured the grief-stricken Valentine. 'I should r-r r-r-r r-rather b-b-b-burst upon him s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s suddenly with the an-n-n-n-n-nou-ou ouncement, and not prolong his s-s-s-s sufferings with sus p-p-p-p-p-p-p-o-o-o-onse!'"

The horrified publisher saw in this sort of dialogue a dreadful and terribly costly alphabetical procession. He sent for the author and agreed to return to the old arrangement.

As soon as the author again began to collect his pay by the line, poor stuttering Gaston and Valentine were overtaken by an untimely fate, and the short paragraphs were resumed.

Recent Book Issues.

Many who are musical in a vocal or instrumental way, often regret their inability to procure the latest musical productions at anything like what they deem a reasonable price. With a view to changing this state of things, R. J. Ralston & Co., 207 South 11th Street, Phila., have begun the publication of a series of sheet music compositions for voice and piano that while being thoroughly new and down to date are sold at popular rates. Dance music, sentimental, comic songs and other compositions are included. "What Happened to O'Hara" and "O'Grady's Trolley Party" are two rollicking songs bound to make a hit wherever heard. "A Rustic Dance" by Howell and the "Dancers Delight Schottische" are also compositions overflowing with spirit and melody. "Since Mollie Moved Away" is a very pretty ballad that has already become a favorite. They are all of easy vocal or instrumental execution and will be found decidedly tuneful additions to the music of the day.

"Diana's Hunting" by Robert Buchanan is the latest issue in the very interesting Twentieth Century Series" of novels published by The Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York. The book is beautifully printed and bound and contains a number of good illustrations. For sale by Porter & Coates.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The complete novel in the February issue of Lippincott's is "Ground-swells," by the well-known writer, Mrs. Jeannette H. Walworth. The scene is in New York city, and the heroine is, or tries to be, a New Woman. The miscellaneous articles are of the usual high charater and the poetry of the number is by Joseph Wharton, Charles G. D. Roberts and Clinton Scollard. Published in this city.

The fiction in the February number of "The Quiver" comprises installments of stories, all illustrated. The others articles are of the usual high character and the departments contain much information. There is an attractive pictorial supplement entitled "Labors of Love for Christ's Lambs." Published in New York.

A Boy's Temptation.

BY OLIVE BELL.

"FIVE dollars!" Young Frederic Watson looked at the slip of paper he held in his thin fingers, a second time, before he could fully realise that Benjamin Frey, the millionaire banker, had given him a check for five dollars! It occurred in this way.

Frederic Watson was the eldest of six children who were reaping the benefits of an improvident father's wild-goose speculations. Few men had started out in the world with better prospects of success than Lemuel Watson. Yet few men had made worse use of their opportunities—for the frenzy of growing rich without either physical, or financial capital, had seized him, and the result was—failure!

Benjamin Frey was a distant relative of the family—an eccentric bachelor—and it had never once occurred to him, that a little financial help, would be gratefully accepted by the struggling children, whose energy and ability was sorely taxed to make "both ends meet."

Frederic had been sent to his office on an errand, and something in the tired young face and dejected attitude of the boy, aroused the dormant sympathies of the millionaire, and the check was the result. Frederic's face flushed crimson, and with a confused murmur of thanks, the boy—for he was not quite eighteen—walked out into the frosty morning air, looking more bewildered than pleased.

"Five dollars," he kept repeating, "yes—he distinctly said five dollars. And yet—" he held the slip of paper close to his eyes, and scanned the figures eagerly, "the check calls for five hundred! O, what will I do?"

Frederic turned hot, then cold, as he fully realised the banker's mistake. His face burned, and he unconsciously bared his head, for something seemed weighing him down, and he could not get his breath for the tumult of thoughts aroused by the possibilities this mistake held for him, and the comforts it might mean, for the little flock at home.

"But he did not mean it,—he said five dollars!" muttered Frederic, resolutely putting the temptation aside. He would not present it, at any bank, until the millionaire rectified his mistake. For through all the years he had toiled to help his parents, he had never sullied his name by the commission of a mean or dishonest act.

He had been moral, temperate, and industrious always; and the younger children had trusted to his guidance, with implicit faith in his ability. How could he betray that trust? The blush of shame dyed his cheeks, as he thought of the possible results. No! he must not for a moment dream of taking advantage of Mr. Frey's mistake—for mistake it was, let him reason as he would. The now invalid father, who considered him a marvel of prudence, and honesty, must not be deceived—the mother who had trained him to despise trickery of all kinds, must not be disgraced! And thus through all that Winter day, that slip of paper in his pocket-book, came between him and his daily duties. Satan was not idle either, for as any man knows, if he sees the slightest weakness in any soul, he will follow it up, and accomplish its ruin at last. He brought some specious arguments to bear on Frederic, but without avail. Circumstances too, made it peculiarly hard for him to resist this temptation. The winters of '94-5, were especially hard on the wage-worker's, and that morning his younger brother, had come home with the despairing news, "Fred, the works have closed down; what will we do?" That evening when Frederic was putting away his books, he noticed the eyes of one of his employer's fixed on him, with curious intentness.

"Frederic," said the kindly old man, who pitied the boy from his heart, but owing to business depressions, was unable to pay him more than starvation wages, "how are you getting along at home?"

"Not very well, sir," frankly replied Frederic. "Will was thrown out of work to-day, and Jessie, was suspended yesterday."

"And there is no prospect of present employment, I suppose."

"No, sir; work is hard to get."

"Yes," sighed his employer, "and I am sorry. I may go under myself. But remember, Frederic, 'honesty is the best of policy.'"

Frederic flushed hotly, for somehow, he imagined his employer laid peculiar stress on the word "honesty." Had Mr. Frey discovered his mistake and told him? It was more than likely, for the two men were staunch friends. Were they weighing him? Well—they should not find him wanting.

Benjamin Frey was seated in his luxurious office that evening, and from the expression in his face, his clerks knew that something had disturbed him. He had always been what people called 'a hard man,' selfish to a degree, and arrogantly proud of his own financial success. His employees were kept under iron rule, and poor wages, and he was never known to contribute a dollar to either public, or private charity. Therefore, his gift to Frederic Watson, of five dollars, was so at variance with his general policy, that had it become known, would have created consternation among his workmen.

When the door opened, and Frederic Watson entered, the millionaire looked up sharply. The day had closed in, with gusts of snow and sleet, and the boy's face, was almost as white as the snow on his coat. And as the banker's keen eyes scanned the boy, he noticed, that every stitch of his clothing, from head to foot, was worn threadbare, and that the thin hands were gloveless, and red with cold.

"Mr. Frey," began Frederick, with a tremor in his fresh young voice, "you made a mistake in filling out this check. It was for five dollars, instead of five hundred."

"Ah!" The banker picked up the slip of paper laid down before him. "I thought I had made a mistake, but was not quite positive. But my boy," and his keen eyes fixed themselves on the worn face, "were you not tempted to get it cashed, just as it stood?"

"I was," frankly replied Frederic, who candidly confessed his reflections, adding some information about the pinching at home.

Mr. Frey's eyes were moist with sympathy—a feeling, he was almost a stranger too—when the boy finished his story, by saying—"But we will pull through some way and have plenty, when business brightens up."

Mr. Frey pushed the slip of paper towards Frederic.

"There, my boy, take that for your honesty. Get it cashed to-morrow morning, and make your family comfortable. I will see what I can do for you in the future."

And Frederic went home with a light, and thankful heart. Mr. Frey kept his word, and followed up his gift, with many others. Frederic was given a paying position in his counting house, Will and Jessie, were found suitable employment, and the appreciation the family manifested for his kindness, broke the crust around the heart of the selfish man, and he realized the truth of the proverb "it is better to give, than receive."

"And who knows," Frederic often remarks to his mother, "but we may inherit his millions yet."

For Frederic's sake, we hope they will.

A DOG'S TOILETTE.—It may not be generally known that there are certain tailors and outfitters in Paris who make a specialty of the supply of wearing apparel for dogs.

Enter one of these establishments and you will see displayed a large assortment of garments suitable for all sizes and varieties of the canine race.

Some lady of fashion wishes to take her pet to a reception; she pays a visit to the costumier, who at a moment's notice, is ready to supply all that is required in the matter of shape, color and material as befitting the occasion. It is wet, the "poor dear" may catch cold—a water-proof combining elegance, comfort and impermeability is at his disposal.

A journey is contemplated—in that case a dust coat will come in useful, also a shawl in case of draughts. In fact, the most delicate lady in the land scarcely finds it easier to supply her own wants than those of her favorite companion, the dog.

We are informed that a gentleman recently bought a complete traveling costume for his spaniel, which was subject to colds in the winter. The coat was fitted with pockets, intended for the accommodation of brushes, pocket handkerchiefs, railway tickets, etc. But a dog that respects itself will not be content to wear splendid outer garments whilst neglecting its underclothing. Ah! no; he is too delicately bred for that. He must have his dozen shirts made of cambric or silk, and embroidered with the monogram of his owner.

Last, but not least the shoes. Until recently these were simply shapeless leather bags. As an improvement, we have now India rubber shoes, the elasticity of which allows them to be more easily modelled to the foot. A tailor, describing in a daily paper the marriage of an Ambassador's daughter, says: "I made for his excellency's dogs and those of his daughter a dainty gala outfit of the same color and material as the liveries of the footman."

After the ceremony, when the young bride returned from church and mounted the grand staircase at the Embassy, where lunch was provided, she was met by her dogs thus attired and held in leash by liveried servants holding silken cords ornamented with bouquets of orange blossoms.

This is not the only example of the kind that may be cited. He goes on to say: "For the marriage of a great financier's daughter I made from measurements bridal toilets of white faille trimmed with real lace and garlands of orange flowers for the dogs of the bride. I superintended all the details down to the boots, which were made of satin."

A BLIND BUILDER.—One of the most famous yacht designers in the world, Mr. John B. Herreshoff, an American, is blind, and has been so afflicted since he was sixteen years old. He goes to his works every morning at nine o'clock, and without one moment's hesitation walks straight to his desk, takes out a bunch of keys, selects the right one, and opens the desk.

Its pigeonholes are filled with papers and designs, yet he picks out any particular document that he may want, entirely by memory and sense of touch, which has been developed in a most extraordinary degree. He works out great problems in mathematics in his head, and evolves wonderful devices in mechanics without the aid of a secretary, or pen or paper.

A small model of the yacht, showing the plan upon which it is to be constructed is made, and the blind man, sometimes sitting before it for days, runs his hands lightly over its lines, thus getting a perfect picture of the shape of the boat in his head. Many changes suggest themselves to him, and he works them out with mathematical precision to test their correctness.

A few inches more of depth at a certain point may mean the added power of several hundred square feet of canvas, or the alteration of an angle may increase the speed of the craft without injuring its heavy-weather capacities, and all this Mr. Herreshoff plans with the greatest certainty. His is one of the most noticeable cases of indomitable will overcoming physical restrictions.

WONDERFUL MOSQUITOES.—The Reverend Zeb Twitchel was the most noted Methodist preacher in Vermont for shrewd and laughable sayings.

In the pulpit he maintained a suitable gravity of manner and expression, but out of the pulpit he overflowed with fun.

Occasionally he would, if emergency seemed to require, introduce something queer in a sermon for the sake of arousing the flagging attention of his hearers.

Seeing that his audience were getting sleepy, he paused in his discourse, and then proceeded as follows.

"Brethen, you haven't any idea of the sufferings of our missionaries in the new settlements, on account of the mosquitoes in some of these regions being enormous. A great many of them would weigh a pound, and they will get on logs and bark when the missionaries are passing."

By this time all ears and eyes were open, and he proceeded to finish his discourse. The next day one of his hearers called him to account for telling lies in the pulpit.

"But I didn't say one of them would weigh a pound; I said a great many, and I think a million of them would." "But you say they barked at the missionaries." "No, no, brother—I said they would get on logs and bark."

LOYALTY.—Is there nothing in which we owe unhesitating allegiance and unvarying loyalty? May we yield to every passing whim and flutter in aimless vacillation with impunity? Assuredly not. There is a constancy binding and imperative upon us which makes room for all progress and is in a line with all growth. It is constancy to our highest ideal—to truth, to duty, to ourselves, to one another. It tolerates no half-way stations; it is content with no given point of attainment. It honors and clings to all that is noble, all that is pure, all that is true, all that is wise, as far as it can be discovered; and it loosens its hold on one step only to take another in the same direction.

THE German Emperor, it is said, is fonder of Shakespeare than of any other author.

LADIES RELIEF.—Safe, Sure and Reliable; Failures unknown. Cures all womb troubles. Unsurpassed. For particulars address The Electro Chemical Battery Co. Richmond, Ind. Lady agents wanted.

HAIR REMOVED

Without pain, injury or discoloration of the skin. Absolute removal on first application. Send for it and show it to your physician, and if he demonstrates it contains acid, caustic or other poisonous injurious to the skin, your money refunded. The only chemically pure liquid discovered. Get the best. Agents wanted. Send 4 cts. in stamps for circulars and booklet on beauty. $1 a bottle prepaid, in plain mailing box. No-Hair Mfg. Co., Rare Bldg., Chicago, Ills.

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Every Month

to the person submitting the most meritorious invention during the preceding month.

WE SECURE PATENTS FOR INVENTORS, and the object of this offer is to encourage persons of an inventive turn of mind. At the same time we wish to impress the fact that

It's the Simple Trivial Inventions That Yield Fortunes

—such as De Long's Hook and Eye, "See that Hump," "Safety Pin," "Pigs in Clover," "Air Brake," etc.

Almost every one conceives a bright idea at some time or other. Why not put it in practical use? YOUR talents may lie in this direction. May make your fortune. Why not try?

Write for further information and mention this paper.

THE PRESS CLAIMS CO.

Philip W. Avirett, Gen. Mgr.,
618 F Street Northwest,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The responsibility of this company may be judged by the fact that its stock is held by nearly two thousand of the leading newspapers in the United States.

Humorous.

FOR INSTANCE.

"Dislikes full oft do turn to love."
"An instance!" "Here—receive it:
The more we hate to go to bed
The more we hate to leave it."

Good skylight—The sun.

Usually temporary insanity—Time out of mind.

A rather uncomfortable seat—The seat of war.

Why does a person who is poorly lose his sense of touch?—Because he does not feel well.

"Here's where I get in my work,' said the tailor as he put on the overcoat he had made for himself.

Waiter: What shall I get for you? Professor, absent-minded, reading the bill of fare: I am busy now; ask me after dinner.

Artist, exhibiting an antique: There's a nice bit I picked up in Rome.

Unappreciative friend: Why on earth didn't you get the rest of it?

She: Yes; that is Mr. Gamboge, the artist. He is wedded to his art.

He: Judging from his appearance I should say that he didn't marry for money.

Crusty: So you're going to be married, eh? What will you do when the wolf comes to your door?

N. E. Gotte: I'll my wife feed him home-made biscuits, and then I'll sell his skin.

During a series of wet days, a gentleman ventured to congratulate his umbrella-maker.

"Yes. That's all very well, sir," she replied; "but then there's nothing whatever doing in parasols!"

Editor: Yes, your poem will have to be returned. The idea is very good, but the verses limp somewhat.

Spring bard: Well, I can account for that. I had a very bad attack of rheumatism when I wrote them.

"I understand you are a graduate, Miss. Did you ever study English literature to any extent?"

"Oh, merey, yes; we had Hogg for breakfast, Bacon for dinner, Lamb for tea, and Lover in the evening."

A schoolmaster who asked a small pupil of what the surface of the earth consists, and was promptly answered "land and water," varied the question slightly, that the fact might be impressed on the boy's mind, and asked, "What, then, do land and water make?" to which came the immediate response, "Mud."

A speculative Scotch gentleman wishing to dispose of some bees, so, to attract purchasers, he printed the following placard:

"Extensive sale of live stock, comprising not less than one hundred and forty thousand head, with an unlimited right of pasturage."

The ingenious trick succeeded to admiration, for his stock brought high prices.

Applicant: No; I didn't git no fixed wages where I was last. I worked on time.

Business man: Were you discharged?

Applicant: Yes, sir. I expected to be there four years, but they discharged me in three years for bein' good.

Business man: That's strange. Where did you work?

Applicant: In the penitentiary.

It was an hour or two past midnight and Mr. Jagway was fumbling about in the hallway, and muttering angrily to himself.

"What's the matter?" called out Mrs. Jagway, from the floor above.

"There's two hatracks here," he answered, "an' I don's know w'ich one to hang m' hat on."

"You've got two hats, haven't you?" rejoined Mrs. Jagway; "hang them on both."

The rising orator of the backwoods of Canada was lately addressing the assembly of fellow-patriots. In the course of his speech his patriotism was bubbling over. His eloquence was a surprise to even himself, for this is what he asserted:

"The British lion, whether it is roaming the deserts of Africa or climbing the forests of America, will not draw in his horns or retire into his shell."

Among the advertisements in a German paper there lately appeared the following:

"The gentleman who found the purse with money in the Blumenstrasse is requested to forward it to the address of the loser, as he was recognized."

A few days afterwards the reply was inserted—

"The recognized gentleman who picked up a purse in the Blumenstrasse requests the loser to call at his house."

The following story is told of the Rev. Dr. Morse: At an association dinner a debate arose as to the use of the rod in bringing up children. The doctor took the affirmative, and the chief opponent was a young minister, whose reputation for veracity was not high. He maintained that parents often do harm to their children by unjust punishment, from not knowing the facts of the case.

"Why," said he, "the only time my father whipped me was for telling the truth."

"Well," retorted the doctor, "it cured you of it, didn't it?"

COULDN'T BE BEAT.—A farmer came into a grocery store the other day, and exhibited to the eyes of an admiring crowd an enormous egg, about six inches long which he avowed to have been laid by one of his own hens. He had it packed in cotton, and wouldn't allow anybody to handle it for fear of breaking the phenomenon.

The grocery man examined it with the rest, and, intending to chaff the countryman, said,—

"Pshaw! I've got something in the egg line that will beat that."

"I'll bet you five dollars you haven't!" said the countryman, getting excited.

"Take it up," replied the groceryman; and, going behind the counter, he brought out a wire egg-beater. "There's something in the egg line that will beat it, I guess," said he, reaching for the stakes.

"Hold on, there," said the farmer; "let's see you beat it," and he handed it to the grocer.

The latter held out his hand for it, but dropped it in surprise on the counter, where it broke two soup plates and a platter. It was of solid iron painted white.

"Some folks think they're tarnation cute," muttered the farmer, as he pocketed the stakes and lit out; "but 'taint no use buckin' against the solid facts!"

KNEW ALL ABOUT IT.—He came into the office looking greatly worried.

"I wish," said he to the advertising man, "to advertise a lost dog, and I want you to put it in big type—the bigger the better—any way I'll give ten dollars for the return of the animal. Now I think of it, you can double the reward, for I've got to have that dog back."

"When was he lost?" inquired the advertising man.

"Yesterday. He went away with one of my boys and failed to return."

"Couldn't the boy tell you where he lost the dog?"

"No; he was lost with the dog, and I haven't found him yet."

"What!" exclaimed the newspaper man. "You don't mean to say that the boy is lost and you are only advertising for the return of the dog?"

"Certainly I do. The boy will be returned free of cost, but it takes money to get a dog back. I know all about it. I've lost them both before."

And the newspaper man had accumulated some more knowledged.

INFLUENCE OF AFFECTION.—There is a good deal of canting about involuntary affection in the world, and all that; but a young lady should never let such foolish notions enter her head. She should allow the pride of conscious strength of mind to keep her above every foolish, vain and nonsensical pretence towards this precious fop, and that idle attendant on a lady's will. She should lay it up in her heart as an immutable principle, no love can last if not based upon a right and calm estimation of good qualities; or at least, that if the object upon which it is lavished be not one whose heart and whose head are both right, misery will surely be her portion.

A sudden preference for a stranger is a very doubtful kind of preference, and the lady who allows herself to be betrayed into such silly kind of affection, without knowing a word of the man's character or his position, is guilty of indiscretion which not only reflects unfavorably upon her good sense, but argues badly for the nature and ground-work of that affection.

DOLLARD & CO.,

TOUPEE

1223 CHESTNUT ST. Philadelphia, Premier Artistes IN HAIR.

WIG

Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG, ELASTIC BAND TOUPEES, and Manufacturers of Every Description of Ornamental Hair for Ladies and Gentlemen.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

TOUPEES AND SCALPS. INCHES.	FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.	No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 2.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.	No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.	No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA,

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS.
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.

1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING. LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.

None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

THE CROWN

PIANOS AND ORGANS

Were Awarded FOUR MEDALS AND DIPLOMAS, also chosen for 12 STATE AND FOREIGN BUILDINGS AT THE WORLD'S FAIR. Twenty Medals and Diplomas were taken by makers of the raw materials used by me in constructing the Crown.

The Crown is the only Piano which contains the Wonderful Orchestral Attachment and Practice Clavier, the greatest invention of the age and by the use of which you can imitate perfectly the Harp, Zither, Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar, Clavicord, Dulcimer, Spinet, Harpsichord, Music Box, Autoharp, Bag Pipe, Etc.

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The Illustrated Souvenir Catalogue, telling the whole story, sent free. Ask for it.

GEO. P. BENT, Manufacturer,
#45-253 Washington Boul., CHICAGO, U. S. A.

Don't buy a Piano or Organ until you hear and examine a "Crown" and get prices.

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Anthracite Coal. No Smoke. No Cinders

On and after Nov. 17, 1895,

Trains Leave Reading Terminal, Philada.

Buffalo Day Express	daily	9.00 a m	Arr
Parlor and Dining Car, Buffalo and Chicago Exp.	daily	3.25 p m	Arr
Sleeping Cars.	daily.	9.45 p m	Arr

Williamsport Express, week-days, 8.30, 10.00 a m, 4.00 p m. Daily (Sleeper) 11.30 p m.

Lock Haven, Clearfield and Du Bois Express (Sleeper) daily, except Saturday, 11.30 p m.

FOR NEW YORK.

Leave Reading Terminal, 4.10, 7.30, (two-hour trains), 8.30, 9.30, 11.30 a m, 12.30, 1.30, 2.35, 5.00, 6.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night. Sundays—7.10, 8.30, 9.30 a m, 12.30, 4.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night.

Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 2.55, 8.08, 9.40, 10.14, 11.14 a m, 12.07 (Dining car), 2.35, 3.45, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m. Sunday 3.55, 8.08, 10.18 a m, 12.14, 3.55, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30, 4.30 (two-hour trains), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 8.45, 10.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 6.05, 8.00, 9.00 a m, 1.00, 2.00, 4.30, 5.30, 6.33, 9.45 p m. Sundays—4.27, 8.32, 9.00 a m, 1.05, 4.20, 8.32, 9.46 p m. (9.45 p m, does not connect for Easton on Sunday.)

FOR SCHUYLKILL VALLEY POINTS.

For Phœnixville and Pottstown—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.47, 11.05 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 6.23, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30, 11.35 a m, 4.00, p m.

For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.47 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.23, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30 a m, 6.00 p m.

For Lebanon and Harrisburg—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 7.30 a m.

For Pottsville—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.47 a m, 1.42 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 6.00 p m.

For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves: Week-days—Express, 9.00, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00, p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.30, 6.30 p m. Sundays—Express, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.45 p m.

Parlor Cars on all express trains.

Brigantine, week-days, 8.00 a m, 4.30 p m.

Lakewood, week-days, 8.00 a m, 4.15 p m.

Detailed time tables at ticket offices, N. E. corner, Broad and Chestnut streets, 833 Chestnut street, 20 S. Tenth street, 600 S. Third street, 2062 Market street and at stations.

Union Transfer Company will call for and check baggage from hotels and residences.

I. A. SWEIGARD, General Superintendent. C. G. HANCOCK, General Passenger Agent.

BOOKKEEPING SIMPLIFIED. (WAGGENER'S.) Mailed on receipt of price, $1.00. Send for Circular. C. R. DEACON, Publisher, 927 S. Fourth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, say "Way Down on the Swanee River," either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC, IMMEDIATELY correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out any air or tune that may be heard or known.

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